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TRAVELS IN EAST ANGLIA

ELY CATHEDRAL FROM THE SOUTH-EAST

TRAVELS IN EAST ANGLIA

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BY

F. V. MORLEY

WITH TWO PLATES IN COLOUR, 12 OTHER ILLUSTRATIONS AND TWO MAPS

NEW YORK
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TO

F. M. AND L. J. M.

WHO GAVE ME FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF ENGLAND,

SOME TWENTY YEARS AGO

PREFACE

IN the text which follows I have merely collected from a variety of sources, some little incidents and descriptions, with now and then diversions for the sentimental traveller and now and then a dipping into the past.

As to contemporary sources, I see that first of all my thanks are due to the "Highways and Byways" Series, which vary in excellence, but are all good. Then come such sympathetic and discerning writers as W. H. Hudson and Edward Thomas, in "Afoot in England" and "A Literary Pilgrim" respectively. Mr. Dutt's "Literary Associations of East Anglia" has been much consulted. To go through all the sources would take a page or so of names, and I have tried instead to give credit for each citation in the text. If there have been omissions in courtesy, I can only pray for mercy.

Except to those whose aid I borrow I make no apology for quoting so much. Associations are the best part of travel, and they need to be told in full. All colour is lost without the idiosyncrasies of the original expressions. This leads to much unavoidable skipping about, and one has to

waive all hopes of a connected story. Even worse, to treat some associations at all fully I have had to cut monstrous cantles out of others. Where is Thetford, with Tom Paine, and the winding roads which lead from Thetford to Diss, tunnels of green through which the sun shoots golden wedges, and where there are accidental meetings with pretty gipsy girls? Where are the Broads, with the wherry sails like butterflies? And Cromer's cliffs, and Epping Forest? Acknowledgment of incompleteness does not make the annoyance, I find, any less.

I have no doubt that all the tales, save one or two fickle inventions, are familiar to the experts. One has, nevertheless, to bear in mind that thought the French have put concisely: *Toutes choses sont dites déjà; mais comme personne n'écoute, il faut toujours recommencer.* And of the experts, I may say that three have treated me with a kindness that has been a continual surprise. I refer, with gratitude, to Mr. Edward Clodd, of Aldeburgh; to Mr. V. B. Redstone, of Woodbridge; and to one who knows to perfection the art of quickening the pulse of human interest, Mr. E. V. Lucas.

F. V. M.

OXFORD, 1923

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Scale of Miles

0 5 10 15 20 25 30 35 40

NOTICE
Please do not write in this
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TRAVELS IN EAST ANGLIA

A VIEW FROM HADLEIGH CASTLE

HADLEIGH CASTLE stands on the green ridge which forms the Essex boundary to the estuary of the Thames; and one glance from its site comprises all the traffic borne upon that waterway from London to the sea. The Thames must be the oldest river in the world, if one measures age by experience. As an American sailor once told me, " there sure hangs " about its estuary a romance which is unique and haunting. There is always something mysterious about the mouth of any river—the familiar wonder at the known meeting the unknown, the mingling of the friendly with the unfriendly, the combat (it is hardly a union) of the spirit of the river with the spirit of the sea. There is always an appeal to the adventurous imagination. But about the view I speak of there is a wonder more specific, and something more intense than these generalities. Conrad attributes part of this romantic feeling to the fact " that the sight of human labour and the sounds of human industry do not come down its shores to the very sea, destroying the suggestion of mysterious vastness caused by the configuration

of the shore." And this is true. You gaze from Hadleigh Castle over the flat spread of Canvey Island, skip the widening river, and search in vain along the equally flat Kentish foreshore for any sign (on the land's part) that this region is one great focus of the world's traffic. From the Blyth Sands along to the mysterious Island of Grain there is nothing but a curious attractive dreariness, and your unobstructed sight is tempted on to the mantle of wooded hills behind.

For one opinion on this view, I should like to quote a little more from my sailor friend. Our conversation took place in the fo'c'sle of a tramp steamer, northward bound from San Francisco, and rolling, at that moment, under a leaden sky somewhere off Cape Flattery. For some days I had been attempting to conceal ignorance of the sea by the appearance of some "work-pants" bought at an Embarcadero pawnshop for "four bits"; and for some odd reason, which does not appear now, in the hip-pocket of those filthy trousers I kept the "Meditations" of Marcus Aurelius. I did not read it much, and had no desire to make the incongruous choice evident. Nevertheless, on a certain day one of the men, hitherto quiet and untalkative, asked me to show it to him. Turning the book over in his swollen hands, he gave it back with the remark that "it was better read in the original."

I was not quick enough, nor mature enough, to make much use of the talk which followed. I did not gain what one would like to have—a knowledge

of his quaint character. I remember only that he came originally from Stockholm, and had gone to sea in his early 'teens. He had little ambition and perhaps not the ability to rise from before the mast; but somehow he had stored up an amazing quantity of fact and fiction, which he would brood upon and suddenly eject dogmatically. In particular, when I was asking him about the romantic appeal of various ports—for he had something of Conrad's vision of romance—he spoke, in spurts, about the Thames. He had read of the discoveries of very ancient skeletons at Galley Hill and Tilbury; and with that type of imagination which loves to traffic in big figures, sketched the glamour which appealed to him. Though this is not in his own words, he was asking a spectator to stand on Hadleigh Hill when that foothold was hardly, or but just, emerging; and, at that recent geologic epoch, yet still a time so remote we cannot pin it with a date, he would ask the watcher to conceive the plastic scene as altering before his eyes; the land uprising at a slow and certain rate, the river wandering from side to side between its hills, wearing away its bed and banks, and cutting out, about as fast as it is cutting now, its wide valley. And lastly, he was asking one's intricate imagination to shrink and dwindle in order to follow what those other humans thought who were gazing southward then. He indicated, perhaps not accurately, yet with a high feeling for dramatic values, the ghosts of the old men looking at all the panorama of life and energy from their days to this along the waterway. "Gawd!" said

my friend ; " jest think of it ! " And spat emphatically on the deck.

It was a sincere tribute. Very likely one could etch his pictures in more graceful phrases, and fill them in with touches of detail. He skipped the first Roman galley, with its flashing armour on the steel-grey surface ; he did not indicate the savages on this more wooded shore plucking each other's arms and chattering at the miracle of rhythmic oars. He skipped the Danes, landing here at Benfleet ; and, perhaps worse, said nothing of the pennoned and high-pooped caravels and cogs tacking across the estuary, dipping their ensigns as Raleigh, Drake, and Grenville, with a host of others, passed along. Up this way came the " Golden Hind," with South Pacific weeds upon her hull, to lie at Deptford for the multitude to visit ; down, not long after, came the " Mayflower," recently " hired " in London, to pick up at Southampton her amazing company. He did not mention these. Nevertheless, he saw most clearly how the tall ships, the spanking clippers, barks, and brigantines, had given way, with infinite disgust at the indignity, to squat and dirty steamers ; but he reconciled this by his own preference for steamer life. And by and large, I do not know that one can better his honest expression of appreciation, given in a dingy fo'c'sle on the world's other side. Vertical furrows cleft his thin cheeks as he pursed his lips for the expectoration. He repeated the phrase to himself, quite softly, " Gawd ! jest think of it !"

On one summer's afternoon, when I came to

Hadleigh for the first time from Rochford, these recollections cut across another and a very different chain of musing. Rochford Hall is still standing, though not quite so lordly as in the days when it had eight towers and so many gables that a little girl (whom I placed in the garden) used often to puzzle her head with the impossible task of counting them. Then, for she was vivacity personified, she would forget all about the numbers and run off to chase the butterflies in the old park, hoping she could get far enough from the Hall to escape her daily lesson on the lute. This little girl was Anne—Anne Boleyn as the histories record; but to King Henry, as he later rode that way, simply "My Lady Anne of Rochford."

King Henry's comings, however, were after Anne had been to France to continue her education. Mr. Fisher sums up what she seems to have learnt: "Seven years passed, during which Anne became proficient in the language, the elegancies, and not improbably the vices, of French society. Returning to England in 1521, she entered the suite of Queen Catherine, and here her flashing eyes, sprightly wit, and perhaps also some charm of French intonation and speech, some touch of dainty and radiant caprice, arrested attention." A tremendous fillip was given to English history by that pretty face. Anne awakened, in the phrase of another historian, that "strange historical phenomenon, the Conscience of Henry VIII." It was after seeing Anne that Henry discovered that his marriage with Queen Catherine "was looked upon with disfavour from above, that it was no marriage,

that the King had for eighteen years been living in sin." His awakened conscience smote him for a quick divorce. It was suddenly clear to him that for the sake of the country he must have male issue. And so the King came hunting, coursing through the Essex forests with a jingling cavalcade, and dallied long at Rochford.

On leaving Rochford I was still uncertain as to which I should choose of many inland rambles. At that moment I was not thinking of the Thames; but one of those pleasant memories from books cropped up, and turned my thoughts to Hadleigh. Ever since reading "Cunning Murrell"—the tale by Arthur Morrison—I had promised myself a holiday in Hadleigh village; for, as readers will remember, the scene is laid in the Hadleigh of the smuggling days, a hundred years or less ago. A different region it was then, with Southend undreamed of, Leigh a little fishing village, and Hadleigh but a huddle of cottages about the cross-roads; and there were many customs which seem to have died away. Besides its merits as a story, "Cunning Murrell" makes these customs live again.

The description of Hadleigh Fair is an example. To this event came then all Leigh, Prittlewell, Eastwood, Rochford, Benfleet, and Canvey to taste the Gooseberry Pies—"Gooseberry Pie being the crown, glory, high symbol, and fetish of Hadleigh Fair, and having been from everlasting." Then the author goes on:

The visitors from a distance bought their gooseberry pies at the booths and stalls, except such as had friends living in Hadleigh, with home-made pies of their own. The home-made pies were in general esteemed superior, because of a greater substance in the crust and a more liberal disposition of the fruit. Those at the stalls, though handsome, plump, high, delicate, round, and full to look at, had a disappointing way of collapsing "aw to crumbles" at the first bite of a healthy jaw, revealing in the remains the hidden chamber of air that had given to the pie its goodly seeming; a hidden chamber filled and widened, it was commonly reported, by a puff of the bellows under the paste before baking. Moreover, to put no more than four gooseberries in a penny pie was justly regarded as an act of rapine. The home-made pie, on the other hand, offered something for the teeth to get to work on. Made in the biggest pie-dish available, it was roofed over with a noble arch of crust, solid and enduring, more often than not made of bread-dough an inch thick; and its complete filling of gooseberries left no room for air. It was a piece of politeness to exchange wedges of this pie among friends, or even, for them that aspired to a gentility above that of their neighbours, to exchange little separate pies made for the purpose; with the accompanying message: "Please, mother say, will you accept of a bit o' gooseberry pie?"

The person thus addressed was commonly as well assured of the coming of the pie as of the coming of fair-day, and might even have witnessed its hazardous transport through crowds of merrymakers the length of the village. But it was good form, nevertheless, to affect ineffable surprise and delight at the present, and to make the return in kind (if, indeed, the present were not itself a return compliment) with expressions of depreciation of her own handicraft. "I was that ashamed arltogether . . . if your mother will axcuse . . ." and so forth.

Moving upon this background come the four main figures of the book: "Cunning Murrell,"

the quack doctor, witch-finder-general of Hadleigh ; Roboshobery Dove, one-legged seaman of a genial kind ; Dorrily Thorn ; and Steve Lingood, the blacksmith. Memory of the last two caused me to look for Dorrily's black cottage over Hadleigh Castle Lane, where in the garden she at last appeared to Lingood's watching eyes with the token—a red rose it was—in her dark hair. I looked, but did not find the cottage ; and so was drawn onward to the castle, " ruins mighty in decay," on the boldest hill of these parts, and but a moment down the winding lane.

There are two splendid towers left, the inner menaced by serious fissures, but the outer still sound in structure. It was in this outer tower that Roboshobery used to sit with a spy-glass and watch the river :

> For to him this view was something like the reading of a newspaper ; not a speck of humanity crawling and skipping on the green marshes far below, not a boat pulling through the blue water, but told some tale of local news to his long-used eyes ; and all the tidings of London port were set before him, with no obscuring medium of print. . . .

And so it was that the figure of my sailor friend began to come up, slowly, through the lower stages of consciousness. I had flung myself down in the warm grass on the edge of that steep hill, just outside the palings which enclose the castle ; and that castle was forgotten, and, I fear, even Cunning Murrell, in watching, almost as a sudden discovery, the ever-moving traffic of the Thames. The river was a sparkling blue that afternoon, and I could

pick out the red dot of the Nore Lightship down the estuary, with a string of barges under their brown sails holding to its north, and the deep-water craft diverging to the south. For a time the flat Kent shore riveted my attention, with reminiscences of walking there one winter afternoon, with a tall roving figure who kept chanting to the wind, no matter how our feet were ploughed in mud :

> It's down by the Lower Hope, dear lass,
> With the Gunfleet Sands in view,
> Till the Mouse swings green on the old trail,
> our own trail, the out trail,
> And the Gull Light lifts on the Long Trail—
> the trail that is always new.

Then again my fancy skipped, and studied Canvey Island, spread like a green map below. Canvey—the name is old, older than Anne of Rochford, and it brought recollection of a forgotten Essex industry. "Near the Thames' mouth," said Norden in 1577, "below Beamflete, are certain ilandes, called Canvey Ilandes, low merish grounds ; and for that the passage over the creeks is unfit for cattle, it is onlie converted to the feeding of ews, which men milke, and thereof make cheese (suche as it is), and of the curd of the whey they make butter once in the yeare, which serveth the clothier . . ." Cheese from sheep's milk was then a very common produce, and I studied the island to see where the old "wicks" or milking sheds were placed.

But all the time, despite these divagations, there was growing the half-forgotten memory of

the little fo'c'sle scene. I have been writing in a way that reverses actual impressions. The real conversation had been incomplete; it was by watching the view here that I gathered the sailor who spat vigorously had gained his own emotions at Hadleigh Castle. Here an imaginative mind can catch some glimpse of the whole panorama, from the first twitch and heave of the land above the water, to this spectacle of tramps and cargo ships and now and then a liner swinging southward, bone in her teeth, bound to San Francisco or to Suez, or, for all we know, to Malabar. Day and night, with the turn of every tide, they pass and disappear hull down on the horizon. And I think it would be in keeping with what little I remember of the man that occasionally he would make excursions on shore to see how ships looked from that aspect. The more I struggled to recall him, the more certain I became that all this view had been most curiously packed up and carried across the world, had been transhipped in the impressionistic manner I have mentioned; and had been seen through his eyes before it was coloured with my own.

All afternoon I lay aloft on the green ridge-line, watching now the ships and now the island, and thinking of a thousand dreamy things; and the opposing shore grew misty as the evening stole away. Somewhere beneath the red of sunset lay the unsuspected bulk of London—almost as indecipherable from this spot as in the days when it drew its importance from the single bridge, built with the aid of an island long since vanished. Screened and hidden, the city sent its messengers. A train

flashed comet-like beneath to join the galaxy of lights now twinkling in Southend. Even as I rose to go, the red running light of a ship appeared, standing out upon the trail, and I looked far to the horizon to catch the light which guided it. I could see the Nore ; but it is perhaps in the best sense of Kipling's stanza, that from the land you cannot quite catch that other gleam—you have to be on shipboard to see the message hovering where the Mouse swings green.

FROM CHELMSFORD TO COLCHESTER

FOR those of us who are incorrigibly bad at writing diaries a good way of preserving memories is to note them by the books we buy. Something is necessary to tag events as they pass rapidly behind us. Almost anything will do, if it is not too bulky and we could be sure of keeping it. But there is also great choice among reminders. A scrap-book needs an unfortunate amount of attention. Snapshots may be invaluable, and yet at best they are only thin slices of emotion. You may scratch a name, a date, upon them—nothing else until they are printed, and by then you have forgotten, or have lost the stimulus. Likewise, they collect and strike you in a batch when only one impression is wanted. The distinction is like that which comes in writing a letter, when you want to know how a doubtful word is spelt. You prefer to ask a friend rather than a dictionary. He gives the one required missing link ; there is no break in thoughts. But turning over the pages of the dictionary, the chances are that you become lost over some odd combination of letters never before noticed. In a much more real way it takes almost superhuman effort to go to an album full of memories and not diverge into a hundred musings foreign to your

purpose. Again, photographs are stern masters. They make you wait upon them, and mount them with the right paste (which is always getting lost) lest they curl and fade and die. But I think the worst is that they need friends. It is poor sport taking them alone.

Most of these objections are overcome by the fact that of discovering good books there is no end; and on the blank page at the back of a sufficiently friendly volume one may pencil a note or two in such a way as to increase its value greatly. Instead of a book, it has become a part of you. You have exercised the rights of personal property; and among books, only those so marked are safe from your friends. The note is made upon the instant; the thought shot in mid-flight, without the difficulty, as Samuel Butler phrased it, of putting salt on its tail. You have tied together text and situation, and you are likely to remember both. When the book is finished, it slips from your pocket, goes winging back by mail to the fixed base of operations, and neatly remains, a double companion, upon a handy shelf.

I should have remembered a day in Chelmsford without a reminder, but I am recalled to it much more pleasantly and vividly because I slipped into Clarke's bookshop, came out with "The Friendly Road" by David Grayson, and read it at one sitting that night in the "Golden Hart." This choice was singularly fortunate, as I shall point out in a moment. I had been roving back from Southend via Rayleigh, and had been thinking about "Mayflower" days. This part of Essex was

79760

well represented in the old migration. The names of Alden, Standish, Carver, are in Rayleigh Church registers ; in Eastwood lived the Vassals ; Billericay had four representatives in the first company to sail. I had been noting the similarity between some of the Essex churches—those timber churches for which the county is famous—and many in New England ; and trying to explain this by elements of common tradition, as well as by the predominance in each environment of wood for building purposes.

Chelmsford has many memories of the Reformation. Here lived Sir Walter Mildmay, who built and endowed Emmanuel College, Cambridge, and who is remembered for the somewhat daring answer to Queen Elizabeth. Summoning him, she said, " I hear you have created a Puritan foundation." " I have set an acorn," was the reply, " which, when it becomes an oak, God alone knows what will be the fruit thereof." One consequence was the ready emigration of Cambridge men to Massachusetts. The mother of John Harvard, by the way, was of a Chelmsford family.

So it is fitting that Chelmsford Cathedral, reached through a tangle of short lanes, has in it an interesting Mildmay Memorial. Standing beyond the organ, where one may study it and copy the inscription unobserved by the body of the church, it records how Sir Thomas and Avicia, presumably Walter's parents, " had fifteen pledges of their prosperous love—seven whereof were females—eight were males." Towards the bottom of the monument are seen these pledges in sculpture,

the seven on the left, the eight upon the right, each side making an ascending scale, and the whole forming a very quaint array. But even though the Mildmays were a godly family, the Cathedral is more intimately associated with Thomas Hooker, the minister who combined splendid gifts of speaking with excellent organizing ability—as, later, he showed in Massachusetts. He died in New England, on a July day in 1647, as the sun was setting. An elegy by John Cotton (not the tobacconist, but an old Puritan divine) describes him as :

A son of thunder, and a shower of rain.

Some two hundred of his sermons were transcribed from his manuscripts and sent to England for publication ; but, according to a note in " New England's Memorial," scarce half of them ever saw the light.

The strong Essex influence among the Pilgrim Fathers accounts for the existence of the Chelmsford in Massachusetts ; and I am tempted to include a story about that newer town. It is taken from a pamphlet dated 1675. Near to its outskirts, towards the end of one summer, a certain " Captain Moseley with sixty men met a company, judged about three hundred Indians, in a plain space where few Trees were, and on both sides preparations were making for a Battle ; all being ready on both sides to fight, Captain Moseley plucked off his Periwig, and put it into his Breeches, because it should not hinder him in fighting. As soon as the Indians saw that, they fell a Howling and a

Yelling most hideously, and said, '*Umh, ump, me no staw merre*' (stay here?) '*fight Engismon, Engismon got two hed; if me cut off un hed, he got noder, a put on beder as dis*'; with such like words in broken English, and away they all fled and could not be overtaken, nor seen any more afterwards." Such was the notable Battle of the Periwig.

These old associations have, of course, little enough to do with David Grayson; but the point is that they are called to mind by the simple action of taking his book from the shelf, and by recasting some paragraphs which rose from notes in that pocket volume. And though I have so far said nothing of the spirit of Chelmsford, as it appeared upon this busy market day, the atmosphere was not entirely dissimiliar from what is pleasant in the farming life of the Middle West. Every town has its spirit, county towns especially, if we were only subtle enough to see. It is very difficult to shadow through "the obscuring medium of print," and I am going to hazard merely the briefest of suggestions. The spirit of Chelmsford, meaning by that the spirit of Essex, is to be found not so much in the town itself as in the market; and to trace it at all fully you will have to follow back the husbandmen to those little villages which feed this centre as a heart is fed by arteries. Then will you see the wheat lands and the quiet, homely, country business which is all synthesized in Chelmsford, but which is at first hard to disentangle from the qualities in which a town near London apes the city.

What I am saying amounts to this: to study Essex you must spend some time in studying the villages—a thing true for any county, but peculiarly true in this one. This has been put in better words, and the study conducted by an expert in delicate observation, in Mr. Beckett's "Romantic Essex." Though their two countrysides are very different, the human tones of Mr. Beckett and David Grayson are so similar that one would class the books together.

The way from Chelmsford to Colchester is more than usually interesting, for it follows almost exactly the line of the old Roman road. First would have been a narrow, grassy, winding track through the forest—this was the way the Trinobantes used, when Cymbeline had his capital at Colchester, and his Queen had there a garden, as Shakespeare says, with violets, cowslips, and primroses. Then upon the way came Claudius, and captured Cymbeline's town, and placed there the Colonia Camulodunum, the first Roman colony in Britain; and the road was pushed irresistibly through the woods from the bridge-head at Londinium, past Cæsaromagus (near or upon the site of Chelmsford); no longer the winding tract along the ridge-lines, but over hill and valley in a straight, connecting line with an even gravel surface over its five layers. Light and shadow through the trees played then upon the famous Fourteenth Legion, "Victores Britannici," the men marching with nodding plumes, standards up, brazen armour clanking as the tired sandals rose and fell. Thirty miles

a day—Rome's pace; and the men were dusty and perspiring, and cursed as much as marching men do nowadays, though with a fuller flavour from the Latin tongue; and sang, occasionally, some old counterpart to "Rimini."

At this time the Romans of the day "evidently took a very special interest in everything connected with Britain. The leaders of Roman society, like Mæcenas, drove about in British chariots, smart ladies dyed their hair red in imitation of British warriors, tapestry inwoven with British figures was all the fashion, and constant hopes were expressed by the poets that, before long, so interesting a land might be finally incorporated in the Roman Empire."[1] The one thing society found hard to condone in British custom—for the tribes were by no means all naked savages adorned in blue paint—was the way they tenaciously clung to trousers. I think the Romans were nearly always disturbed at the thought of humans advertising themselves, when clothed at all, as bipeds. It was one of Ovid's complaints, in his mysterious exile on the Black Sea, that the inhabitants had not overcome the original sin of breeches. . . . That, however, is an interlude. Rome was interested in the Colony, but, as every one remembers, it was not to be exploited without trouble. Under the misgovernment of Nero, revolt came to a head. The opportunity occurred when Suetonius left East Anglia and took his army to Mona:

[1] E. Conybeare, "Roman Britain," S.P.C.K. (1903), p. 129.

No sooner had the governor's absence removed their fear than the Britons began to discuss the evils of their slavery, to compare their wrongs, and to fan their resentment by putting the worst interpretation upon them. All that patience could gain, they murmured, was the imposition of yet heavier burdens on their easy tolerance. In old days the tribes had each one king, now they had two. The governor drained their blood, the agent their purse. The quarrels of their masters were as deadly as their concord. The governor's sergeants, the agent's menials, heaped insult upon injury. Nothing was now safe from their greed or from their lust. "In battle," they cried, "it is the brave who win the spoil; these Romans are for the most part cowards and weaklings; yet they plunder our homes, kidnap our children, and levy us for war. We can die, it seems, in any cause except our country's! Let the Britons number themselves: how small then seems the invader's force! It was thus that the German provinces flung off the yoke: yet their bulwark was a river, not the sea. We have our country to fight for, our parents and our wives: the invaders' motives are but luxury and greed. They will retire, as their sainted Julius retired before, can we but rival our father's spirit. Nor must we lose heart at the result of one or two engagements: despair breeds more fury and more determination. See! already heaven pities Britain. The Roman general is away, his army deported to another island: and here we are met to debate—the hardest step of all! Besides, in plans of this sort daring is safer than discretion.

Fired with such reflections as these, the whole island went to war, led by Boudicca, a lady of the Royal line; for in their commands they make no distinction of sex. They drove the troops from the scattered blockhouses, stormed the garrisons, and invaded the Roman Colony itself as the seat of their slavery. In the mad wrath of their victory no act of barbarian savagery was left undone. Had not Paulinus heard news of the outbreak, and hurried to bring aid, Britain would have been lost.

Such is the account which Tacitus gives (I have

quoted Fyfe's translation from the old historical novelist) of the mutiny which broke out round Camulodunum. Boudicca, or Boadicea, was Queen of the rebellious Iceni, who lived in Norfolk and Suffolk; they were joined by the Essex tribe of Trinobantes, and thoroughly sacked the Colony. Here the great Temple to Claudius rose high above the town, perhaps as striking a landmark as the present water-tower of Colchester. The Roman veterans fled to this, leaving civilians to be massacred; but it was stormed, every soul killed, and the Temple (as all other buildings in the Colony) burnt and razed to the ground. When Rome's revenge came, this was the reason for the completeness and thickness of the Roman walls which now remain in Colchester. Not even Chester can show such fine relics. "As the abiding wall of a still inhabited town," says Freeman, "the Roman wall of Colchester is, I repeat, unique in Britain." From the corner by St. Botolph's Church, passing along Priory Street, one may follow the whole quadrilateral around, a circuit of nearly two miles. And because it is impossible to better his description, I am going to quote here a passage from Mr. Beckett:

> In some places, as Freeman says, "the walls stand free; everywhere they can be seen by going down courts and alleys. In spite of the battering and patching of fifteen or eighteen centuries, even the original method of construction is clearly shown. Four courses of septaria—a stone found in large quantities along the Essex coast—alternate with three layers of the thin Roman bricks. Thicker by several feet at the base than at the summit, the wall slopes up from the ground, the line of which it

follows, the grey mass of its surface beautifully relieved by the warm red bands of brick, and by the ivy and moss that overrun it. In Priory Street, where our circuit begins, the houses, which are little more than cottages, are built just without and under the wall, which therefore appears plainly wherever there is a break in the line of houses. If you go down some court or alley, as Freeman advises, you see the odd sight of children playing and linen hanging out to dry in little narrow gardens bounded by this immemorial wall. . . .

On the other side of the town is Balkerne Hill, and at the top, carefully preserved, is the best Roman entrance to a town ; the best, and, that at Lincoln excepted, the only one in England. The central arch and guard-rooms are built of Roman brick ; and as it stands it may very well outlast the tremendous water-tower which overlooks it with a jealous eye. From this gate there used to be a daily stream of workers going into the fields ; all the cleared space just outside the walls was carefully divided and marked—in one field a little statue of Mercury, in another a wine vessel, or a spatula, or a rhombic sign, or even a flagon or jar ; any personal sign would serve which signified private property, but naturally each desired something of the picturesque in his own token. The setting up of these landmarks was a matter of prayer and joy to them, and Camden, quoting Siculus Flaccus, gives some of the details—how first they brought the boundary tokens out, and set them near to the desired spot, adorning them with ointments, ribbons and garlands ; then how a spotless victim was sacrificed over the hole dug for the pedestal, and the blood was dropped on

glowing coals within, and fruit was scattered on the top; how to this wine and honey were added, sprinkled on the coals, and when the fire had consumed all they would place the foot of the boundary mark upon the coals, fastening it with care and treading stones round about; and how they prayed that, so lovingly set up, their tokens would outlast old Time himself.

There are a thousand quaint details about Colchester which I cannot enter here; and indeed so much of the town is one vast museum that it would stagger any tourist to attack it *en masse*. There is an irony about the condition of the Colony after the Romans left that makes the search for Saxon traces interesting—for very curiously the invaders, sailing up the Colne and finding the deserted Camulodunum, hardly entered the town at all. Outside and in the fields they lived, for they were forest-folk who hated walls; and very likely it was then that all the little Romans tokens fell from the boundaries. Only when they were attacked would the Saxons withdraw into the town, and take up stations by the Balkerne Gate.

MYTHICAL HISTORY OF COLCHESTER

THERE are some stories which would be spoilt if we knew them to be true; and a more striking thing than actual history is, if you look at it in the right way, the creation of mythical history. Mythology is often glorious as a work of symbolism where it would be contemptible as science; the Arthurian cycle a splendid tapestry of imagination, even if unreliable for facts; the tales of Geoffrey of Monmouth notable as romance, however indigestible to his fellow-historians; and in each of these cases comes the question, Which aspect do you prefer? Without belittling for a moment scientific history, into which may be blown as much of life and movement as a man may bear to think about, there is, nevertheless, the distinction between what happened and what might have happened. The non-professional skips back and forth, and tries to sip from each full cup.

In reading such a beautifully lucid story as Conybeare's "Roman Britain," a pang comes to the sympathetic soul at the ending of the narrative. Why, when all the troubles had been fairly well adjusted, and peace and the beginnings of a pleasant civilization had been established in Britain, why did the whole situation smash up and chaos come again? Though you can go as deeply as you will into the real history, the facts just happened, and

cannot be avoided ; we look back, and the plaster is set. In a sense, it is no especial credit to Colchester that the Romans came there, and then went away. But it is very much to its credit that King Cole exists, and is a more real character to children than any of the Romans : for that, unlike the history of facts, was in the beginning a consciously fabricated story—the very opposite of a thing which just happened. It would upset our reason if the story of the Romans was not true ; it would lower our pride of imaginative freedom if King Cole was not fiction, and fiction of a very worth-while kind.

Another fairy tale, though this is largely borrowed, tells of the Princess of Colchester. It is that tale, with many variations, of a beautiful princess with a bad sister-in-law. So hard a time had the princess at home—she lived in a palace where now the water-tower stands—that she had to leave and seek her fortune with " a canvas bag of brown bread and hard cheese, and a bottle of beer ; though this was but a very pitiful dowry for a king's daughter." Nevertheless she was successful, and married a splendid young prince from Mark's Tey ; but the sister-in-law, who decided to do likewise, took with her not only " rich apparel, but sugar, almonds, and sweetmeats, in great quantities, and a large bottle of Malaga sack." And she, despite these great advantages, could only find a poor cobbler to marry her, and at that he came from Coggeshall.[1] The

[1] Coggeshall is the butt of many Gotham stories and fool-fables, and " a Coxall job " is still Essex slang for any bungled work.

reason being, to put it shortly, that her disposition was not all it should have been.

The best of all East Anglian fairy tales, however, is the very charming one of "Tom Tit Tot." While the theme is old, it is the telling that is inimitable in the dialect; we can never be sufficiently grateful to Mr. Clodd for making it accessible:

Once upon a time there were a woman, and she baked five pies. And when they come out of the oven, they was that overbaked the crust were too hard to eat. So she says to her darter:

"Maw'r,"[1] says she, "put you them there pies on the shelf, an' leave 'em there a little, an' they'll come again." —She meant, you know, the crust 'ud get soft.

But the gal, she says to herself: "Well, if they'll come agin, I'll ate 'em now." And she set to work and ate 'em all, first and last.

Well, come supper-time the woman she said: "Goo you and get one o' them there pies. I dare say they've come agin now."

The gal she went an' she looked, and there warn't nothin' but the dishes. So back she come and says she: "Noo, they ain't come agin."

"Not none on 'em?" says the mother.

"Not none on 'em," says she.

"Well, come agin, or not come agin," says the woman, "I'll ha' one for supper."

"But you can't, if they ain't come," says the gal.

"But I can," says she. "Goo you, and bring the best of 'em."

[1] This word, which one may find in "David Copperfield," is connected in some way with "maid"; a woman and her *mawther* is a woman and her daughter. The complete story may be found in "English Fairy and Folk Tales," edited by E. S. Hartland, in the Scott Library.

" Best or worst," says the gal, " I've ate 'em all, and you can't ha' one till that's come agin."

Well, the woman she were wholly bate, and she took her spinnin' to the door to spin, and as she span she sang :

" My darter ha' ate five, five pies to-day.
My darter ha' ate five, five pies to-day."

The King he were a comin' down the street, an' he hard her sing, but what she sang he couldn't hare, so he stopped and said :

" What were that you was a singun of, maw'r ? "

The woman she were ashamed to let him hare what her darter had been a doin', so she sang, 'stids o' that :

" My darter ha' spun five, five skeins to-day.
My darter ha' spun five, five skeins to-day."

" S'ars o' mine ! " said the King, " I never heerd tell of anyone as could do that."

Then he said : " Look you here, I want a wife, and I'll marry your darter. But look you here," says he, " 'leven months out o' the year she shall have all the vittles she likes to eat, and all the gownds she likes to git, and all the cumpny she likes to hev ; but the last month o' the year she'll ha' to spin five skeins iv'ry day, an' if she doon't, I shall kill her."

" All right," says the woman ; for she thowt what a grand marriage that was. And as for them five skeins, when te come tew, there'd be plenty o' ways of gettin' out of it, and likeliest, he'd ha' forgot about it.

Well, so they was married. . . .

A better beginning to a story was never written than that, and a better ending never followed it. The trouble caused by those skeins is impossible to overestimate, and eventually, as you remember (or should), Tom Tit Tot came in to help. Then there was trouble with Tom Tit Tot, and all the effort to guess his name, ending with the grand finale and the classic rhyme :

Nimmy nimmy not
Yar name's Tom Tit Tot.

The King was one of the Kings of Colchester; he might even have been King Cole himself in his younger days. The village where the pies were eaten was, as a matter of fact, where Sudbury now stands; and the story is told, of course, in Suffolk dialect. You may catch some of the difference between Suffolk and Essex by comparing this speech with that quoted from "Cunning Murrell."

I am now considerably bothered by the distinction between truth and fiction, set up blithely at the beginning of this sketch. It does not take away from the pleasure of a fairy tale to know that it is a work of fantasy; nevertheless, to make the illusion complete, we weave in every touch we can of verisimilitude. The Colchester district is rich in stories, and I shall take one more example, known as the "Dalmeny Romance." This centres in Thorpe-le-Soken, near Clacton. The time we shall place in the eighteenth century, and name three characters: Kitty Canham, the daughter of a farmer; Mr. Gough, the Vicar of Thorpe-le-Soken; and Lord Dalmeny.

It is possible to compress as much as we require of the legend into brief synopsis. Shortly after Mr. Gough came to Thorpe he fell in love with Kitty; they were married, and he, at any rate, was very happy. Kitty was less contented. She had made one step up in life, but found no complete

satisfaction in the humdrum life of her own community. If they had moved from Thorpe the situation might have been saved. They did not move, and she at last impetuously fled. In London and in Bath she passed as the widow of an officer, and tasted the freedom for which she longed. At Bath she met Lord Dalmeny—he was an elder son, about twenty-two. He became infatuated with her; she stilled the voice of conscience and was married to him.

So far, no doubt, the story is one often duplicated in one way or another; the little ironies to follow remind one of Mr. Hardy's tales; for after a protracted honeymoon upon the Continent, it happened in Verona that she fell ill and died. During her fatal illness Lord Dalmeny was heart-broken, and constant in attention to her every whim. Just before the end she called him to her, and confessed her history; her dying wish was for her body to be embalmed and taken back to that far parish from which she had fled.

Whatever Kitty's faults, she had made two men love her honourably; and Dalmeny carried out what she had asked. The body was embalmed, put into a large chest, and he chartered a vessel for the trip—concealing his own identity under the name of "Mr. Williams," supposed to be a Hamburg merchant. The ship was bound to Harwich; caught in rough weather, she was driven by the storm into the estuary of the Colne. Customs officials boarded her, insisting upon examination. The chest was opened, and "Mr. Williams" arrested for murder. He confessed that he was Lord

Dalmeny, and that he was on the way to fulfilment of his lady's last request, that she be buried at Thorpe-le-Soken. During investigation, the body was removed to the church at Hythe, with the face uncovered so that all might see. Under parole Dalmeny spent his time by the bier.

In the meanwhile word of the extraordinary story came to Mr. Gough. The unhappy vicar hastened to Hythe, brushed aside the single mourner, and recognized at once the pale face of his wife. Bitter words and bitter reproachings followed, as in enactment of a scene from " Hamlet " ; and it is even said the vicar drew weapon in the sanctuary against the tall, black figure of Dalmeny. Neither had anything to lose by fighting, and each had death to gain. Yet each could see the futility even of fighting, and in the end we hear that hands were joined upon the coffin and that both followed to the grave.

That is a tale far stranger than most fiction ; but despite the poetic faith strong in us, despite " that willing suspension of disbelief " which upholds our trust in a story, I think we should be disappointed, with a tinge of bitterness at the deception, if the " Dalmeny Romance " were not true. At least I have told it in good faith. The grave of Kitty Canham is at Thorpe, looking much like the other graves, and has given rise to a vast deal of moralizing.

Though we put fairy stories in one category, and the stories of real life in another, this is no place to continue the difficult distinctions. I have

heard the problem set up in half a dozen different assemblies, and the intricate debates which followed have never ended. At this stage I should like to leave the argument and wander out into the old town, standing upon its fine hill and thinking, as is perhaps right, more of its present life and business than of the past under its feet, and of the bewildering musings to which thoughts of the past may lead. It does no good to deplore that same attention to the present which makes the High Street more interesting to the citizen than King Cole's Kitchen at Lexden.

And yet, for anyone whose interest is less in the commercial than in the picturesque, I do not like to leave without quoting Philip Morant, who wrote a "History of Colchester" in 1748, a folio "Adorned and Illustrated with Sculptures."

He was a modest man, and quotes as a motto :

> What Profit hath a man of all his Labour . . .

as if he were expecting disappointment at the book's reception. But he speaks in it with joy of Colchester's advantages. "For it stands so near the Sea, as to have all the advantages of it, excellent Fish, especially Soles and Oysters; and Water-Carriage, the Hoys and Lighters coming up to St. Leonard's or the Hyth. And it lies far enough from the Sea to be free from Damps and all noxious Vapours. It is also an easy Day's Journey from London, to which a Coach goes Daily, except Sundays . . ." leaving Colchester, we may add, at the hour of five in the morning.

From this old book I learned many things besides the absence of " Damps," of which our fathers had a religious horror. I read about the stirring siege by Fairfax, and about the Priory. I learned that the town was not paved till the time of James I, and other little bits of curious information. I was re-told, with all the emphasis that capitals could impart, that " this very spot was That Ancient Camulodunum." And best of all there were brought back the oysters which (my stay there being in the summer) I had half forgotten. For you may compare them to the Marennes of France, or the giants of New Zealand, or to those from the Chesapeake Bay of Maryland ; and they make all but the very best of these pale and shut up in despondency. I am told by Mr. J. J. Bell that one of his best remembrances, long before " Wee MacGreegor " was thought of, was coming cold to Colchester and being regaled at the " Cups " by a notable drink, mulled claret. The combination of mulled claret and oysters, while perhaps not so orthodox as stout and oysters, is one that appeals vividly to our imagination ; and the suggestion might be made to the cuisine of the " Cups."

MERSEA ISLAND

IN Colchester, not long ago, two friends and I stopped at the window of the enterprising Mr. Poyser, in High Street, and noticed an advertisement of " Mehalah," Baring-Gould's novel about Mersea Island. We had never read it, but as an excursion had been already planned to the station of the old Count of the Saxon Shore, the meeting with the novel came pat upon the moment and we procured it instantly. But before there was a chance to read it we had gone and returned, and so the real joy was lost—that joy which comes from actual identification on the spot of scenes and detail mentioned, to see how literary skill has used and treated them. " Mehalah " would be good for that, though it does not seem as fine a tale as " Cunning Murrell." The characters and conversation are not altogether satisfying, but where there comes description of the Ray and of the marshes, it is graphic and delightful :

A more desolate region can scarce be conceived, and yet it is not without beauty. In summer, the thrift mantles the marshes with shot satin, passing through all gradations of tint from maiden's blush to lily white. Thereafter a purple glow steals over the waste, as the sea lavender bursts into flower, and simultaneously every creek and pool is royally fringed with sea aster. A little later the

glass-wort, that shot up green and transparent as emerald glass in the early spring, turns to every tinge of carmine. . . .

Again, a scene that is pleasant to identify is where Mehalah rowed her punt swiftly down the Rhyn, "as the channel was called that divided the Ray from the mainland, and that led to the 'hard' by the Rose Inn, and formed the highway by which it drew its supplies, and from which every farm in the parish of Peldon carried its casks of strong liquor. To the west extended a vast marsh, from which the tide was excluded by a dyke many miles in length. Against the northern horizon rose the hill of Wigborough, crowned by a church and a great tumulus, and some trees that served as landmarks to the vessels entering the Blackwater." As she was cutting the flood, a boat shot out across her bows and stopped her. In it was Elijah Rebow, the villain of the book.

There is no doubt that Mersea Island could be lonely in the winter, and desolate and dreary. For an "orthodox holiday," as Mr. Beckett points out, "its charm is not of the bucket and spade variety." And yet the story of its desolation may be overdone and dreariness seem unimaginable, as you come along the road from Colchester, dipping down to the Roman River and up a woody hill, and finally catching the view from somewhere about Langenhoe. Away in front of you spreads Mersea; cut from the mainland by a silver gleam it lies as a long wooded hill with the estuary of the Blackwater beyond it, Brightlingsea Reach over to the left. Connecting the island to the shore is

a thin double line of white stakes, and coming down the hill towards the same Rose Inn of "Mehalah," these stakes are seen to mark at once a very ancient causeway and a modern road. This causeway is called the Strood; first laid by the Romans when they came to Mersea for pleasure and for oysters, in the days when a temple to Vesta stood where now is West Mersea Church, the Strood has been built up in modern times so that there is free passage at any state of tide. At this first sight, I say, it is impossible to credit Mersea Island with the desolation commonly reported.

West Mersea, on the outer side and on the highest portion of the island, is a pleasant little village overlooking Virley Channel. Here is the first real indication of the muddy shoals which made the smuggling easy, and capture difficult; and somewhere about here, I presumed, was the scene of a story suggested by some recent very interesting psychical researches. Now this story was not ours, and it is not within my power to give the full details; but such as follows I had from one present and whose information was not calculated to deceive. To put it briefly, a séance was held on Mersea Island with Joe Pullen, a one-time smuggler and now over two hundred years dead. So interesting were the results of this séance that it was repeated for six nights, converse being held with several characters who gave their testimonies clearly as from a witness-box; from the details thus obtained a coherent story can be formed.

Once upon a time, then, there was a Ship Inn

upon Mersea. It was there in 1663, according to the spiritual evidence, though since demolished. Gilbot, the landlord, was a drunken rascal, and his house was regularly used by smugglers—the names of some of these being :

Captain Dick Selfarzio, a Spaniard known as "Blackkerchief Dick," from the black handkerchief which he continually wore.

Cip de Musset, and *Feu de Wit*, Captains of smuggling brigs ; de Wit's ship bearing the name, "Dark Blood."

Big French, a carter who took the smuggled soys and tabac from the Ship Inn to Tiptree Market.

Blue Neck, a Spaniard.

Of the women who come in we have :

Mistress Sue, Gilbot's niece.

Nan Swayle, believed a witch, and ducked during the festivities at the restoration of Charles II.

Pet Salt, presumably no better than she should have been.

Well, there you have the characters, and unfortunately that is nearly all that I can give—I have been unable to find out the whole underlying mystery. The story is a dark one, of a murder (I think the girl was Sue) by Selfarzio, whom she called a "sithering coward."[1] But that is all that I have heard of Mersea's *Grand Guignol*. However one may look at the séance which brought this tale to light, the sittings must have been enthralling to those present.

After some time at West Mersea, in which every-

[1] "Sithering" means "slashing," and is akin to "scythe."

thing else was forgotten in the pursuit of some energetic crabs, we went along the backbone of the isle to look across the Colne to Brightlingsea. A line of trawlers lay at anchor in the river, and scattered all about the blue were the red and white triangles of little sailing craft; behind, the church which has for long been a well-known mark to sailors; and still we looked for the desolation we had been told about. We came at last to this conclusion—that what is desolation to a landsman may not be so to those who love the sea. There is a sharp dividing line between the types. I am quite prepared to grant that looking out across the Mersea Flats one who is interested in the land and all of the land's great granary of interests, will find no trace here of similarity to things he knows, and will name his feeling "desolation." But likewise I maintain that one who has that indefinable love and feeling for the sea, will find a tang of exultation in the unceasing salty wind, and the same urge to a spot like this—untrammelled and untamed—that the shepherd has for quiet pastures. If you take as an example the Desolation Valley of California, or the Bad Lands; or if you even take the desolation of some of the barren isles of Greece, which are easier sung when they have not been seen, it would be in a manner very mildly comparative that one would call Mersea desolate. This fact I know—that after our first visit I shall go again.

HARWICH

COLCHESTER, with all of the intrinsic "Advantages" which Morant gives, forms the logical centre and head-quarters for exploration of this part of Essex. I have told of one minor raid on Mersea Island, and given a tale of Thorpe-le-Soken. The next is obviously to be some account of the old "harborough" of Harwich, as Hakluyt would have phrased it. We go as if to Ipswich until reaching Manningtree, and then due east along the estuary of the Stour.

Of Manningtree itself, aside from the famous Ox which furnished Prince Hal with a notable comparison to Falstaff, I recall little but a tangle of red-brick houses set upon narrow, winding streets; but of the view obtained from Manningtree, and from the road by the river, I have vivid memory. Here, until one learns to like the mud, it is well to choose high tide. Then is the estuary filled like a brimming cup, and all along the opposing bank is gently undulating country, woods of dark green, fields of light green, chequer-boards of cultivation. The Stour, the Orwell, the Deben are three rivers very good to look upon; and they wear a shifting light, a fantasy of light and shade, which is always revising first impressions and reconstructing them afresh.

Harwich is at the very tip of the southern shore ; as they used to say, " The salt water so creeketh about it, that it almost insulateth it " ; and though Dovercourt Bay is growing into a resort, the town of Harwich is now as it has always been, chiefly one for a sailor's interest. Harwich and Brightlingsea have been from the beginning breeders of fine seamanship, and it is fitting to recall some voyages of Martin Frobisher. " The actions that move the world have been prompted and inspired by dreams and visions "—that is the sentence by which the late Sir Walter Raleigh induces the proper mood for the study of the English Voyagers ; and the quest for the fabled realm of Cathay led the gods to watch sometimes noble, sometimes unworthy, but always most curious, actions on the part of human beings resolute to the verge of madness. For many, many years America was but a barrier—an incredible, enormous, impeding blank of coast—where, by rights, no continuity of barrier should have been. The furious efforts to disbelieve in the barrier's existence were such as every one remembers vaguely, but verification may be gained by turning Hakluyt's pages.

It was through the influence of Gilbert's honest declaration of faith in the North-west Passage that Frobisher was enabled to sail in 1756, with two small barks of twenty-five tons, and a pinnace. The hardships meant nothing, the wreck of the pinnace was a trifle, the loss of five men among the Esquimaux all in the day's work, compared to the thrill which resulted when a piece of stone, by chance

picked up and kept as a memento, was assayed. The verdict was—*gold*! At the word thoughts of Cathay fell into the background, and Frobisher was "more specially directed by commission for the searching more of this golde ore then for the searching any further discovery of the passage." And so, "being well accompanied with divers resolute and forward gentlemen, her Majesty then lying at the right honourable the lord of Warwick's house in Essex, he came to take his leave, and kissing her highnesse hands, with gracious countenance and comfortable words departed toward his charge."

The small fleet was now augmented by a ship lent by the Queen. They sailed from Gravesend to Harwich, where they stayed "for the accomplishment of things necessary," and on the last of May, 1577, "hoised up sails, and with a merrie wind" set out once more. The underlying theme of this second voyage is disappointment, at least as regards the object of the search. The most successful things they found were stones, which "altogether sparkled, and glister in the Sunne like gold: so likewise doth the sand in the bright water, yet they verifie the old Proverb: All is not gold that glistereth." "Here," says Master Settle, "in place of odoriferous and fragrant smels of sweete gums, and pleasant notes of musicall birdes, which other Countreys in more temperate Zones do yield, wee tasted the most boisterous Boreal blasts mixt with snow and haile, in the moneths of June [and July. . . ." They tried to lure the Esquimaux into familiarity, to find what had

become of the five men lost the year before, and in the process captured an old woman—" the old wretch, whom divers of our Saylers supposed to be either a devill, or a witch, had her buskins plucked off, to see if she were cloven footed, and for her ougly hew and deformity we let her goe. . . ." The world was full of portents to the Elizabethan seamen ; and when they found a narwhal floating dead upon the water they took its " horne," which was broken at the top and obviously hollow, and put some spiders inside. It forms a quaint picture, if you think of the waist of the ship crowded with sailors watching the result of this ingenious experiment. The spiders died, every one of them. " I saw not the triall hereof," says Master Settle, " but it was reported unto me of a trueth : by the vertue whereof we supposed it to be the sea Unicorne."

But the third and crucial voyage of Frobisher was the one most intimately associated with Harwich. Notwithstanding the commercial worthlessness of the material brought back from the second trip, sanguine promoters raised the admiral's fleet to fifteen ships, and the plans were far more extensive. The enterprise and enthusiasm of those who backed Frobisher are an eternal credit to them. Despite accounts of desolation and of cannibalistic Esquimaux (so were they considered), there was confidence that the mythical gold-mines could be worked ; and there grew likewise the belief, temporarily overshadowed, in the equally mythical Passage. In that Passage lay, as Gilbert had pointed out, England's one great hope. It had to be found, and it had to be guarded. " Certain

numbers," therefore, of "chosen souldiers and discreet men" were assigned to stay on the unfriendly shores. "Whereupon there was a strong fort or house of timber, artificially framed, and cunningly devised by a notable learned man here at home, in ships to be carried thither, wherby those men that were appointed to winter and stay there the whole yere, might as well bee defended from the danger of the snow and colde ayre, as also fortified from the force or offence of those countrey people, which perhaps otherwise with too great multitudes might oppresse them. And to this great adventure and notable exploit many well minded and forward yong Gentlemen of our countrey willingly have offered themselves."

To these gentlemen Richard Hakluyt addressed some "comfortable words," embodying wise advice as to the location of their fort. "This seat," he said, "is to be chosen in a temperate Climat, in sweete ayre, where you may possesse alwayes sweete water, wood, seacoles or turfe, with fish, flesh, graine, fruites, herbes and rootes, or so many of those as may suffice every necessitie for the life of such as shall plant there. And for the possessing of mines of golde, of silver, copper, quicksilver, or of any such precious thing, the wants of those needfull things may be supplyed from some other place by sea . . ." Three ships were to be left with these Miners, Goldfinders, Bakers, Carpenters, Gentlemen, and Guards, for their better comfort. Busily went the fitting out in Harwich Harbour, where lay seven of the ships. The rest came from the Thames, and there begins one of the narratives.

" All things prest in a readinesse, the wind favouring, and tide serving, we being of sailes in number eight, waied ankers and hoised our sailes toward Harwich to meete with our Admirall, and the residue which then and there abode our arrivall: where we safely arrived the 28th [of May, 1578], finding there our Admirall, whom we with the discharge of certaine pieces saluted, acording to order and duety, and were welcommed with the like courtesie: which being finished we landed: where our Generall continued mustering his souldiers and Miners, and setting things in order appertaining to the voyage untill the last of the said moneth of May, which day we hoised our sailes, and committing ourselves to the conducting of Almightie God, we set forward. . . ."

In turning Hakluyt's pages with a modern eye upon them, we are alternately elated and cast down. There is hardly any other book so stirring, hardly any other drama so great in outline or so vivid in intensity. It is all too largely writ, too scattered to be comprehended easily; but it is a work of most inspiring artistry. If we take that one act, or that one epic—the theme transcends classification—which seems to be most tragic, we see an underlying thread which is at first forgotten. The North-west effort opens with a braggart note. The Arctic seas are blocked with ice, the Arctic lands are hostile—this we know from all our modern records; and we shake our heads and sigh a little at that splendid but unmanageable boast of Master Thorne in 1527: *There is no land unhabitable, nor sea innavigable.* The epic gathers speed and

tragedy with Gilbert's essay, and we watch Frobisher's voyages without ever losing our forebodings. We see his third attempt leave Harwich, with the puny fort and the encumbering miners, the fifteen sail filing out past the sandspit, according, as the phrase went, to order and duty; and we see how they were bashed about and "bruised amongst the yce," and how at last they chafed and stood by, unable to land, unable to sail, impotently blocked somewhere in Hudson's Straits. We see them noting down the quaintest lies about one thing and another, and the quaintest truths as well. We see nerves fretted like violin strings, and see them snapping right and left; see the inevitable dissension and disillusion, and the wearisome return; and just as we are about to turn away in pain from all the lost endeavour, we see the glint once more of the underlying thread. The outcome of Frobisher's three voyages was, as Raleigh says, "the discovery of Hudson's Straits, much recrimination among the undertakers, and no gold." It was apparent failure, if ever failure was apparent. Yet a fourth voyage was preparing, when it was diverted to another purpose. And here we see the thread, this time quite clearly, and see how the seamen trained in this folorn hope and in these northern hardships could strike what they called the fear of God into the southern mariners. The impact of men so long baffled by "boisterous Boreal blasts," when once they struck the Spaniard and found out their power, was tremendous. I do not wish to emphasize what everybody knows, nor are the bloody exploits to be condoned entirely;

but, as a drama, is it not tremendous? It has all the elements of fine surprise. By an unsuspected double meaning the hard school of the North-west Passage proved to be the one hope claimed for it. And the old boast of Master Thorne, though it is not too good to look at this complacently, is not far from being justified.

The narration of sea-details about Harwich could go on indefinitely. The port takes its whole character from comings and goings. At the "Three Cups," hard by the church, Nelson stayed on various occasions; I think some of his letters were written in a room which is on view, and in which posterity has tagged along to fame by inscriptions on the walls. Harwich saw another historic date on November 20, 1918, when the German U-boats were surrendered here. One hundred and twenty of the treacherous little craft came nosing in, and they were moored up and down the River Stour, until they lay so thickly the river gained the name of "U-boat Avenue." One recalls in this connexion that Captain Fryatt lived at Dovercourt Bay, just to the south of Harwich; and his body was brought here from Bruges at the conclusion of the war.

But there are still two pictures which should be inserted, however strained the continuity may be. One is a leave-taking at Harwich, the other an arrival. The departure was a real one, the arrival fictitious.

You recall, perhaps, that on August 5, 1763, at five in the morning, an extraordinary effort was

made by an extraordinary man who was usually fond of lying late in bed. Dr. Johnson was spurred into leaving London at that hour in order to accompany Boswell to Harwich ; and I have often thought it was a token of a very real affection that he should go out of his way to do this for so much a younger man. They were out to make a pleasant trip however, in spite of the awkward hours of the coaches ; and they broke the journey at Colchester I do not know for certain where that night was spent, but it was probably at Colchester's " Cups." Boswell was still a very young man, going over to Holland to study. He was a little upset at the prospect, and was unhappy at leaving both Dr. Johnson and his own mild dissipations in town. He records how Johnson, after a full dinner at the inn, spoke appreciatively of eating as a fine art ; but he also records how he " teized " the doctor " with fanciful apprehensions of unhappiness," until Johnson pointed to a moth that had flown into the candle-flame, with the remark : " That creature was its own tormentor, and I believe its name was Boswell."

At Harwich the Doctor walked down to the beach with the boy, and saw him safely on the packet to Helvoetsluys. Then comes a sentence with a fine phrase in it. " As the vessel put out to sea," says Boswell, " I kept my eyes upon him for a considerable time, while he remained rolling his majestic frame in the usual manner ; and at last I perceived him walk back into the town, and he disappeared." What Johnson did then I do not know, but I suspect he had dinner at the Harwich

" Cups," and went back, a trifle lonely himself, to London in the morning.

The fictitious arrival at Harwich is one described by Mr. G. K. Chesterton. " Between the silver ribbon of morning and the green glittering ribbon of sea, the boat touched Harwich and let loose a swarm of folk like flies, among whom the man we must follow was by no means conspicuous—nor wished to be." The man was the detective Valentin, following upon Flambeau ; and it was in the train to London that " The Innocence of Father Brown " first materialized into the world of stories. In keeping with a remark made previously about Coggeshall, that it has many times been made the butt of jokes, I think the very short priest going up from a small Essex village was coming from Coggeshall itself. And if that is true readers of the stories will agree that for once the joke has been turned.

THE CONSTABLE COUNTRY

I AM not pretending that these sketches are arranged in a manner easy to follow, even with the aid of a map; and the worst of it is that having chalked an outline for myself I am continually tempted to wander from it. Look out across Harwich Harbour some moonlit night and see the lights of Felixstowe. To their right, now dark, lies Landguard Fort. It was a haunt of Gainsborough during his Ipswich period; its Governor, Philip Thicknesse, became his friend, as we shall see in a few pages. Of this spot wrote Bernard Barton, the quiet Woodbridge Quaker:

> Along the sands, and by the sound
> Of ocean, moaning night and day,
> It stands: its lonely burial ground
> Scattered with low stones, moss'd and grey,
> Whose brief inscriptions fade away
> Beneath the ocean breezes' spell;
> And there, beneath the moon's pale ray,
> Still walks the nightly centinel.

That is not great poetry, but it is pleasant enough to give excuse to the desire to cross the Orwell and to look both at the fort and at those regions of which Barton spoke in the same vein. This part of the country, between the Orwell and

the Deben, is mentioned with an equal affection in Sir Sidney Colvin's "Memories and Notes of Persons and Places." He tells of his boyhood at Bealings, of his medley of reading, of hunting rats with a certain bandy-legged stable-help, and of being tutored by an elderly individual, dyed-in-the-whiskers, corpulent, and choleric. "Well, from this queerly brought up boyhood I retain . . . impressions of nature and of natural beauty more intense and abiding than any that have been stamped on me since." Not from the holidays upon the Galloway Moors or Wicklow Mountains, or from tours over the Simplon or on the Riviera; not from these did he derive so strong a sense of the intrinsic beauty of the world. And on he goes to describe the "Red Lion" at Martlesham, and the sea flooding the mudbanks of the estuaries, "and lifting and stroking back their water-weeds," until there is desire to leap the Stour and enter Suffolk to revisit those remembered spots.

As against that, however, we have good authority for going inland. While much of Suffolk has been sea-inclined, there is the story of the woman from the interior who "had been brought to the coast for the first time in her life on a ruffling day, and after looking at the sea for a few moments said in her Suffolk accent and in a tone not of approval, "Wha', do it alluz goo *muddlin'* about like that?" In truth those who have been brought up near Dedham Vale or Sudbury have some reason for their contempt of coastal parts. Let us look at Dedham Vale.

If we could postulate some animate spirit to

THE HAY-WAIN

From the Painting by Constable in the National Gallery

each county, we could explain the beauties of the Valley of the Stour ; for we should say that along the boundary between Suffolk and Essex a genial rivalry is natural, and a mutual dressing up. Hence are the greens and golds and browns of summer used lavishly upon the opposing banks ; a field of poppies on the Suffolk hills will give an instant reason for a field of yellow mustard on the Essex side. The lanes of each will have their hedges draped with bryony ; the oaks and elms each try to look the others down ; and the river, as it comes between, now favours one and now the other bank, offering as bribes its willows and its sedge ; where it gives burdock, figwort, and comfrey on the south it will buy passage from the north by water-mint and meadow-sweet and blue forget-me-nots. Above the sedge gleam dragon-flies, and in the stream are water-lilies and the impartial hemlock. Some time or other Dedham Vale was sure to breed its Constable.

Constable Country has its capital in Dedham village. In 1776 there was in Dedham a merry and prosperous miller, living in a comfortable red-brick house, owning several cottages, two windmills, and the watermills at Flatford and at Dedham. A story yet remains of him which may, I think, be quoted. It seems the miller had as tenant in one cottage an old bargee whom, for mutual benefit, he wished to move into another home. Apparently persuasion had no effect ; the bargee refused to move, yet would give no reason for remaining. The more the miller insisted, the more the bargee stuck. Negotiations were long

and arduous, and at last the landlord threatened to use his rights. Finally beaten, the bargee uttered at last his real complaint: "If I must leave this cottage," he cried, despairingly, "I can never shave again."

The connexion may not be obvious. For all his adult lifetime the top step of his stairs had served him as a razor-strop; years had trained it to this purpose, and though willing upon all other points to move, he knew of no other home in the village with such advantageous stairs. But once confessed, the problem was easy. The miller called the carpenter, and the latter sawed the stairs. When they were set up again in the new home every one was happy and all litigation ceased.

John Constable was the son of this same miller. The boy was born at East Bergholt, sent to school at Lavenham, and then to grammar-school at Dedham. When he was eighteen, though it was his pencil that he really loved, he tried the trade of miller for a year. Thus was his youth centred in the Dedham Vale and on the Stour; "those scenes made me a painter, and I am grateful," he wrote, long afterwards. To his father's disappointment he did not give the best of his attention to the business, but would rather spend his time with another young enthusiast, the village plumber and glazier, in studying with minute care the effects of light and shade, colour and form, all from that first mistress Nature. As far as milling was concerned, he seems to have earned nothing more substantial than the title of "the handsome miller";

but for the education of the artist that year was probably the most important of his life.

Yet he was very slow in making up his mind to his vocation. In 1795 he made a visit to London, "for the purpose of ascertaining what might be his chance of success as a painter," and fortunately he came into touch with those who confirmed his own ideas, and who realized that the revolt against the academic, conventionalized landscape had begun. But there were difficulties in the shape of family disapproval. It meant more of a break then than now for a miller's son to set up as an artist. His mother doubted that the profession was respectable; his father's emphasis was upon business; Constable's own mind, on his return from the London visit, was not greatly touched by books or outside influences. Alone he had to think the matter out, and there was naturally an army of doubts to combat. The church, the mill, the counting-houses all had been thought of, and dismissed. Lack of confidence had cut the first trail short in London; and Constable at twenty-three was still full of unrest and indecision.

In that same year, however, and quite suddenly, we learn from his biographer that he was trying painting once again, even though at twenty-three it was far more than usually laborious to learn the elements of his technique. For two years he studied other masters and then (in 1802) he realized his own purposes, and began to recognize his own talent. "For the last two years," he wrote, "I have been running after pictures, and seeking the truth at second hand. . . . I shall return to

Bergholt, where I shall endeavour to get a pure and unaffected manner of representing the scenes that may employ me. . . . There is room for a natural painter."

That last line expresses the answer to the questions of Constable's troubled years; once he discovered it, and once he discovered that he could be a "natural painter," he was contented and happy in the "incessant labours in the executive parts" which he prescribed for himself. One may note his confidence growing steadily; quoting from a letter of 1803: "I feel more than ever a decided conviction that I shall sometime or other make some good pictures—pictures that shall be valuable to posterity if I do not reap the value of them." And his contentment came from his other faculty of realizing to perfection his own limits, without desire of outreaching them. He had little personal ambition but to be "nearly always in the fields, and seeing nobody but field labourers." So far as possible, I let him speak for himself. "The sound of water escaping from mill-dams, etc.; willows, old rotten planks, slimy posts and brick-work—I love such things." Again, "I love every stile and stump and lane in the village; as long as I am able to hold a brush, I shall never cease to paint them."

Now comes the story of his marriage. As a man of twenty-four he had met Maria Bicknell, a girl of thirteen, and daughter of a solicitor to the Admiralty; she had come to stay, it would seem, with her grandfather, the peppery old rector of Bergholt. Eleven years formed a large discrepancy

at this period of their lives, and it was almost certainly some time later before he discovered that he was in love. This was another matter for the careful, steady, almost procrastinating man to think out thoroughly. The situation was simplified by this fact—Maria loved him ; it was complicated by the choleric rector, and her father who expected to become solicitor to the prince regent and could look higher than a miller's son. Furthermore, by all worldly standards the man who loved slimy brickwork, and who would sit so dreamily beside the Stour that field-mice crept into his pocket—that man was unsuccessful. At thirty-five he had not earned a penny by his thoughts ; though deep down in his heart he knew that he was right, and though he painted happily and naturally through that knowledge, none save a tiny few of critics would encourage him. The generality of men, even the generality of those that bought paintings, would not recognize that the ordinary, daily beauties of a country vale, even though treated with all imaginable skill and colour and suggestion, were worthy subjects for an artist and were worthy to be owned by men of taste. So it may well have been a questionable proposal, for a man consistently honest, to support a wife on the prospects of fame after death.

I may be doing Constable an injustice in this analysis ; but where ordinary men are thoughtful, the cautious Constable was doubly so. He broached the subject at thirty-five ; the solicitor, decorously firm, waved it away ; the rector was peremptory, even violent, about it ; and Maria was distinctly

frightened. Constable would have his will, but he was prepared to wait. In the meanwhile the pair corresponded; Maria's first replies were timorously addressed "Dear Sir," but this soon ripened into "Dearest John." On his part the letters are of a piece with all his other work, without extravagance or frenzy, but strong in constant, quiet, and deep affection.

At thirty-five he had earned nothing; at thirty-eight he had still earned nothing; at forty the prospects were hardly less shadowy, but they agreed to wait no longer. In spite of an instant eruption from the old volcano at the rectory they were married in 1816, and shortly after all were reconciled. In three years his steady work and marvellous ability at catching true effects were beginning to win him academic honours, though there was little popular appreciation of the reality and natural attractiveness of his subjects—so little, indeed, that the couple were fortunate in coming into inheritances at this time.

It has been a slow story so far, of patient, faithful, long endeavour. He had spent what is to many men a lifetime gathering his tools. Had he died at forty we should have known little of him; at forty-five, and he would have known little of his reward. But his silver years were to be his best, and in 1824, when he was forty-eight, came his first real recognition. "The Hay-Wain," completed three years earlier, was then hung in the French Salon, and among the French artists there was a burst of real enthusiasm over Constable's style and his ability. In due course the same enthusiasm came

in England ; but as far as personal desire, it came too late. Constable did not worry about fame for himself, but he wished to share it with his wife. In 1829 he was elected an Academician. Not long before she had left the now large family upon his single hands. " It has been delayed too long, and I cannot impart it," were his words, and he never quite recovered from the shock of her death.

At Dedham is the church which comes into his landscapes ; the fields, the hills, the trees, and his delightful silvery outlook, are all about you—even the sky, as artists here say with proprietary pride, is Constable's. " Other painters "—I quote Mr. Monkhouse—" have made us see nature at a distance or through a window ; he alone has planted our feet in her midst." We share his quiet enthusiasm and his steady love as we wander round the valley or paddle aimlessly upon the river. I have said that Dedham Vale was sure to breed its Constable. It has taken part in the Elysium that artists try to make for us out of the material they find on earth. One may look there for the " Hay-Wain " and the dog, for the sheep and brook and poppies in the " Cornfield," for the " Valley Farm," for the lights and shades of slowly drifting clouds, and for the silver of the willows after rain. We cannot spend time better than in looking for such things, and we rarely have such aid. There are other things to look for as well—the Flemish houses in Dedham, the quaint church in East Bergholt, which was deprived of its steeple

by the devil—local legend says the flapping of his wings was heard as he flew away with it one stormy night—and now the bells are hung in a wooden cage in the churchyard. I can only sum this whole paragraph by quoting Mr. Davies :

> A poor life this if, full of care,
> We have no time to stand and stare !

The warm love for particular little regions is a large part of the secret of British art and British writing—the British goddesses are pretty, gracious, living beings unlike majestic statuary. The Romans likewise had the trick of loving tiny angles of a country stream, half known for its own sake and half for the associations of the onlooker ; but there is a difference between Dedham Vale and Tuscany. I think the slim, shy spirits are dearer here, and they have more delicate colour in their rain-washed cheeks. And in departing, if you would see the better what I have ill expressed, it would be well to look up Robert Nicholls' poem, called, with a true touch, " Farewell to Place of Comfort."

SUDBURY

I HAVE already noted Sudbury as the most likely spot for the scene of "Tom Tit Tot," and I have the less hesitation in placing the daughter who ate five pies in Sudbury in that Dickens has considered the town to be fittingly named "Eatanswill." The caricature as drawn in "Pickwick" is perhaps a trifle harsh, though certainly a jaded appetite is there unknown; and a great tragedy to those who follow Dickens's footsteps came when the "Rose and Crown"—an inn for some five centuries famous, and more so since he stayed there—was recently destroyed by fire. However, there is still its memory, while the "Four Swans" or the "Bull" may supply material wants.

The central figure in the history of Sudbury, if we may judge from the statue upon Market Hill and from the many reproductions of his name about the town, is Thomas Gainsborough. In proper chronological sequence I should have taken Gainsborough (1727–1788) before Constable; and though the two may be compared as two men who came from much the same environment, it must not be forgotten that the former is the earlier. In the lives of each there is not much greatly adventurous or exciting; and interest will come largely from the emphasis of mild anecdotes.

Nevertheless Gainsborough was distinctly different, quicker and more impetuous, than the Dedham miller. He came of a family in which genius, or at least inventiveness to a high degree, was more evident. An elder brother was well known about the country as "Scheming Jack"—as the man who was crazy because he tried many times to make a flying machine. "Scheming Jack" was destined to be more successful when he tried more homely things, and among the inventions which worked were a self-rocking cradle as a boon to weary mothers—he had himself seven daughters—and a mechanical cuckoo, to cuckoo perpetually, for the same reason. And Scheming Jack had likewise some talent for painting; at least there is a tale that he had a commission from the "Bull"—you will find the old half-timbered inn at the foot of Friar's Street—to paint a signboard. It is said the landlord offered him for this twenty shillings. "Make it thirty," said the elder Gainsborough. The landlord refused. "Make it thirty," repeated Scheming Jack, "and I will tie up the bull with an elegant gold chain well worth the extra." Again the landlord refused, and the sign was painted at the lower rate. After the first night of rain, however, when people glanced up at the new sign, not the slighest trace of the bull was to be seen. Drawn by the amusement outside, the landlord himself came to view; and he saw what all the others laughed at, that although the background of the painting was still perfect, there was only a blank silhouette where the noble beast had been. Angrily, as soon as possible

he called on Scheming Jack. "Ah yes," said he, pretending to commiserate, "you should have let me tie him up." And then it turned out that the bull had been sketched in with soluble distempers only.

Thomas Gainsborough had somewhat of this combination of inventive spirit and of mischief; but the element of drawing was stronger in him, and he had more love for stable products. The story is well known of how he loved to play truant from school, rambling instead with pencil and paper through the country lanes. The father put a stop to this by forbidding holidays, and by notifying the teacher. Then came the trick by which the boy forged a note in his father's writing, saying "Give Tom a holiday." The ruse worked perfectly, and Tom instantly prepared a whole series of such notes, hiding them, for future use, in a warming-pan. Came a cold snap, the warming-pan was requisitioned, the notes discovered, and his father made his celebrated statement that Tom was born to be hanged. Only a trick of grammar prevented this from being an unconscious and true prophecy about a future R.A.

The house where Gainsborough was born and brought up is in the street named after him, leading from Market Hill; it bears a white stone tablet which records the fact. It was in the orchard belonging to this house that the "Tom Peartree" incident occurred. The story goes that the boy, shortly after he had been pardoned for his holiday notes, used to run out before breakfast to sketch; and he was sitting one morning in the orchard

with his pencil long before the house was up. So quiet was he as he sketched that he was quite unnoticed by a local ne'er-do-well, who stopped outside the breast-high brick wall and made as if to clamber over and steal the fruit. This face Tom sketched, then fled; in fleeing, scared the trespasser, who made his own escape. Later the man was apprehended by the likeness; he confessed and (so we fear) was not forgiven. Of this achievement Tom was so proud that he shaped a board, life-size, to represent the head and shoulders painting it to the likeness of "Tom Peartree." The curiosity, mounted upon a brick wall, has been preserved in Christchurch Mansion, Ipswich.

When Gainsborough was fourteen he was sent to London to study art, and when he was eighteen he returned. At this age, according to Fulcher, he was "handsome, of a fair complexion, regular features, tall, well-proportioned. His forehead, though not high, was broad and strongly marked, his nose Roman, his mouth and eye denoting humour and refinement; the general expression of his face thoughtful, though not altogether pleasant . . ."

He returned to paint, and for a year was uneventfully at work upon landscapes around Sudbury; then came the incident described by Alan Cunningham. Accurate or not, it is attractive enough to be admitted:

> It happened in one of his pictorial excursions among the woods of Suffolk that he sat down to make a sketch of some fine trees, with sheep reposing below and wood-doves roosting above, when a young woman entered unexpectedly upon the scene, and was at once admitted into the land-

scape and the feelings of the artist. The name of this young lady was Margaret Burr ; she was of Scotch extraction and in her sixteenth year, and to the charms of good sense and good looks was added a clear annuity of two hundred pounds. . . .

About this annuity, and about the birth of Margaret, was a mystery which Sudbury tongues were not content with leaving at the phrase " she was of Scotch extraction." It was rumoured and was generally believed—she herself believed it firmly—that she was the daughter of an exiled prince. It follows as the night the day that a princess shall be painted, and once she learned of Gainsborough—why should one doubt the way that Cunningham relates ?—it was commanded that a portrait should be done. " Numerous and protracted " were the sittings, even though Gainsborough was, with other subjects, a worker noted for rapidity. " The young lady " continues Fulcher, " expressed her warm admiration for the painter's skill, and in doing so gave him the gentlest possible hint that perhaps in time he might become the possessor of the original." Gainsborough was always quick to take hints.

The wedding over, the pair lived only a short time in Sudbury. We may contrast the enterprise of Gainsborough, who had no more money than Constable, with the slowness of the latter ; yet there is no reason to doubt the happiness of this young couple's married life. Gainsborough was hot-tempered, and not entirely to be admired ; but Mrs. Gainsborough was a charming character, and there is a pretty tale which Fulcher puts in

somewhat later. "Whenever Gainsborough spoke crossly to his wife, a remarkably sweet-tempered woman, he would write a note of repentance, sign it with the name of his favourite dog Fox, and address it to his Margaret's pet spaniel Tristram. Fox would take the note in his mouth and duly deliver it to Tristram. Margaret would then answer, 'My own dear Fox, you are always loving and good, and I am a naughty little female ever to worry you as I often do, so we will kiss and say no more about it.'"

Their first move was to Ipswich, where they had a little house in Brook Street. I have already named the man who was Gainsborough's first patron—Philip Thicknesse, the Governor of Landguard Fort. Thicknesse first caused a Gainsborough picture to be engraved; this was the "Harwich, with Landguard Fort." Nevertheless, financial progress was very slow. For ten years Gainsborough worked between the Stour and Deben, and his thirtieth birthday had passed before he was known at all outside his Suffolk circle. You will find in Gainsborough Lane at Ipswich the scene which he painted in "The Market Cart"; and you remember Constable's letter from Ipswich: "It is a most delightful country for a painter. I fancy I see Gainsborough in every hedge and hollow tree."[1] Though he was happy in these surroundings and at this work, the funds were very low. Thicknesse drew him away, suggesting the move to Bath which made him wealthy and famous as a portrait painter.

[1] A hollow tree comes prominently into the "The Market Cart."

FROM SUDBURY TO COCKFIELD

ALMOST insensibly we have been drawn inland, and at Bury we shall find ourselves as far from the sea (metaphorically) as it is possible to be in England. But it would be folly to hurry on too fast through this interior. It has been done. In 1599, for instance, William Kemp danced a morris dance from London to Norwich, as you find set out in Alfred Noyes' "Companion of a Mile." It was just out of Sudbury that Kemp met the milkmaid who would dance a mile for love; and so, to quote the poem,

I fitted her with morrice-bells, with treble, bass, and tenor bells:
The fore-bells, as I linked them at her throat, how soft they sang!
Green linnets in a golden nest, they chirped and trembled on her breast,
And, faint as elfin blue-bells, at her nut-brown ankles rang.

I fitted her with morrice-bells that sweetened into woodbine bells,
And trembled as I hung them there and crowned her sunny brow:
"Strike up," she laughed, "my summer king!" And all her bells began to ring,
And "*Tickle your tabor, Tom,*" I cried, "*we're going to Sherwood now!*"

They danced that mile until

At Melford town, at Melford town, at little grey-roofed
Melford town,
A long mile from Sudbury, upon the village green,
We danced into a merry rout of country-folk that skipt
about
A hobby-horse, a Maypole, and a laughing white-pot
queen.

They thronged about us as we stayed, and there I gave my
sunshine maid
An English crown for cakes and ale—her dancing was
so true!
And "Nay," she said, "I danced my mile for love!" I
answered with a smile,
"'Tis but a silver token, lass, thou'st won that wager
too."

Kemp dânced along to Rockland, and from Rockland on to Norwich; but he might have been the happier if he had not gone so fast.

One thing about Long Melford I do not wholly understand. The adjective is easy when one sees the village, but mystery comes in considering the phrase by which Long Melford is remembered by most of those who have read widely but who do not otherwise know this corner of Suffolk. "Fair play and Long Melford" cried Isopel Berners to Borrow in "Lavengro." In the tremendous encounter there with the Flaming Tinman, which was the occasion of Borrow's meeting with the marvellous girl, she persisted in encouraging him to use "Long Melford"—by which phrase she meant his right arm. It was by this that Borrow

conquered in the end, and won his tinsmith's van and his companion ; but why the particular bit of slang is not quite clear.

At any rate Long Melford does appear to have some interesting associations, and more may readily be discovered. There is a fine Elizabethan Hall near by, which at one time belonged to Lord Savage, a Royalist in Cromwell's time. It so happened that James Howell, Clerk of the Council and afterwards Historiographer Royal, stayed at Lord Savage's House, and the result was a pleasing letter which you will find in Professor Saintsbury's "Letter Book." I may repeat it here because of its full flavour of Melford in those days ; and because it is amusing to recall the little guest :

My dear Dan . . . I lodge in so virtuous and regular a house as any, I believe, in the land, both for economical government and the choice company ; for I never saw yet such a dainty race of children in all my life together. I never saw yet such an orderly and punctual attendance of servants, nor a great house so neatly kept ; here one shall see no dog, nor a cat, nor cage to cause any nastiness within the body of the house. The kitchen and gutters and other offices of noise and drudgery are at the fag-end ; there's a back gate for the beggars and the meaner sort of swains to come in at ; the stables butt upon the park, which, for a cheerful rising ground, for groves and browsings for the deer, for rivulets of water, may compare with any of its bigness in the whole land ; it is opposite to the front of the great house, whence from the gallery one may see much of the game when they are a-hunting. Now for the gardening and costly choice flowers, for ponds, for stately large walks green and gravelly, for orchards and choice fruits of all sorts, there are few the like in England ; here you have your Bon Chrétien pear and

Burgamot in perfection; your Muscadel grapes in such plenty that there are some bottles of wine sent every year to the King; and one Mr. Daniel, a worthy gentleman hard by who hath been long abroad, makes good store in his vintage. Truly this house of Long Melford tho' it be not so great, yet is so well compacted and contriv'd with such dainty conveniences every way; that if you saw the landskip of it, you would be mightily taken with it and it would serve for a choice pattern to build and contrive a house by.

A fine relish is all this to the imagination, and a fine hand for phrases had this finicking and observant visitor. "Stately large walks green and gravelly" is one; and likewise it is hard to better the calling of a kitchen an "office of noise and drudgery."

There comes now into the story a figure who walked these Suffolk roads just fifty years ago; a young man then, a "very lath for leanness," of dark complexion, with brown hair and liquid, rich, dark eyes. He wore a velvet jacket, presumably grey trousers, and a straw hat. At first he came to Melford and to Lavenham alone, from Cockfield Rectory, a little farther up the line; later in that summer he walked with a companion somewhat older, yet likewise a young man; and when he spoke in his Scotch accent and with the play of nervous hands, you would feel, says this same companion, the "rich, compelling charm of his smile." His name was Robert Louis Stevenson; the friend and companion, Sir Sidney Colvin. Let us quote the latter's words:

The year 1873 was a critical one in Stevenson's life.

Late in July he went for the second time to pay a visit to Cockfield Rectory, the pleasant Suffolk home of his cousin, Mrs. Churchill Babington and her husband. Another guest at the same time was Mrs. Sitwell—now my wife—an intimate friend and connexion by marriage of the hostess. I was shortly due to join the party, when Mrs. Sitwell wrote telling me of the " fine young spirit " she had found under her friend's roof, and suggesting that I should hasten my visit so as to make his acquaintance before he left. I came accordingly, and from that time on the fine young spirit became a leading interest both in her life and mine. He had thrown himself on her sympathies, in that troubled hour of his youth, with entire dependence almost from the first, and clung to her devotedly for the next two years as to an inspirer, consoler, and guide. Under her influence he began for the first time to see his way in life, and to believe hopefully and manfully in his own powers and future. To encourage such hopes further, and to lend what hand one could towards their fulfilment, became quickly one of the first of cares and pleasures. It was impossible not to recognize, in this very un-academical type of Scottish youth, a spirit the most interesting and full of promise. His social charm was already at its height, and quite irresistible ; but inwardly he was full of trouble and self-doubt. If he could steer himself or be steered safely through the difficulties of youth, and if he could learn to write with half the charm and genius that shone from his presence and his conversation, there seemed room to hope for the highest from him. He went back to Edinburgh in the beginning of September full of new hope and heart. . . .

It is very hard to keep from quoting extensively from Sir Sidney Colvin on Stevenson, knowing how the younger man had been ordered south and had come longing for friends, and knowing likewise how staunch and fine and valuable were the friendships which he formed at Cockfield. It

is hardly possible to overestimate the services which Mrs. Sitwell and the young professor of Fine Arts performed for the Scottish stripling. Confidence between the two men began immediately with the meeting. " I had landed," continues Sir Sidney, " from a Great Eastern train at a little country station in Suffolk, and was met on the platform by a stripling in a velvet jacket and a straw hat, who walked up with me to the country rectory . . . "

The only letter which I know from Stevenson at Cockfield is a short one to his mother. " I am too happy," he records, " to be much of a correspondent. Yesterday we were away to Melford and to Lavenham, both exceptionally placid, beautiful old English towns. Melford scattered all round a big green, with an Elizabethan Hall and Park, great screens of trees that seem twice as high as trees should seem, and everything else like what it ought to be in a novel, and what one never expects to see in reality, made me cry out how good we were to live in Scotland, for the many hundredth time. I cannot get over my astonishment—indeed, it increases every day—at the hopeless gulf that there is between England and Scotland, and English and Scotch . . . "

There are some characters who seem to have been born to make friends—more friends than they ever knew. They go through history with a disarming smile, and live on for ever in the quiet security of many hearts. In speaking or in writing, there is that about them which makes you feel some special link that binds you and no other to

them. It was a large part of the charm of Charles Lamb, as Mr. Lucas says, that every one thought he knew him a little better than anybody else. The same is very true of Stevenson, and is the badge of those who love him.

So, with apologies to those who think it is idolatry, I too desired to see the region which surprised Stevenson with its difference from Scotland. I wished to catch the landskip of it, to ferret out the rectory, to follow somewhat in the walks. It was a desire very harmless and, as it turned out, very entertaining. It so happened that I had at Bury a convenient motor lorry; old, to be sure, and a trifle cumbersome for winding lanes; not quite the trim vehicle which might have been obtained if one was careful of appearances, but with something whimsically engaging about its very disrepute. I had likewise run across two friends on cycles who were bent on the same cruise; and so, upon a certain July afternoon, we started off with laughter and with expectation. The sun seemed all the warmer for coming after rain; the road was banked with poppies, shaking the drops from their indignant, scarlet cups; the wind transformed whole fields of waving grain into the shifting sheens of watered silk; and the lorry rumbled nobly, outdistancing the cyclists.

Although I had set out with Stevenson much in mind, and found the rectory, and the church, and the station platform, and many another thing "like what it ought to be in a novel," it is but fair to state that my conveyance did not allow the best meditation possible. For undisturbed attention

to the country, walking is no doubt the better mode of travel. What I did obtain, however, was much unexpected pleasure. I had an interesting debate, for instance, with every opposing vehicle as to the possibility of getting by. I had the pleasure of unanticipated antics on the part of ordinarily placid farm-horses. I had times of stoppage on meeting refractory cattle and was preceded leisurely by various old sheep. Chickens and ducks and pigs in marvellous variety, children of all ages, in turn frightened, amused, curious, and desirous of a race, all contributed to my distraction. I had never known a lorry could be so interesting, and had never known that, being in no hurry, I could have so much real pleasure from its lumberings. Past Cockfield, and the "Black Lion" at Lavenham, and Lavenham's fine church, I came at last to Melford and to Sudbury. There safely housed at the "Four Swans" I was recaptured by the two friends on cycles; and they told me, as I do not doubt, so great was the consternation of the countryside at the passage of the momentous vehicle, that had it been adequately painted, with Chinese dragons floating up aloft, I should have been responsible for turning a whole section of an orderly neighbourhood quite mad from shock.

BURY ST. EDMUNDS

THE keynote to remember about Bury, in comparison with Ipswich, is the Abbey. Ipswich in its growth was largely mercantile. There the burghers always held the upper hand; commerce was more important than the church. It was the other way with Bury, where the town grew up to serve the church and always was subordinate. One other point to be remembered in the history of Bury may be found in Fuller's words, when he says Suffolk "hath the best and the worst aire in England: best about Bury, and worst on the Sea-Side . . ." Medical opinion has reversed this, and we have not the reason men had then to fear the "Damps"; but when it was believed Bury was thronged with the nobility and gentry. So we have first in the history the story of the Church, and when that was over the story of the resort in Defoe's time, for instance when he said "the beauty of this town consists in the number of gentry who dwell in and near it, the polite conversation among them, the affluence and plenty they live in, the sweet air they breathe in, and the pleasant country they have to go abroad in."

For the first period there is no finer way to catch the spirit than to read the second part of

"Past and Present," full of Carlyle's great voice thundering as from some colossal altitude. Take the book down Abbeygate Street with you, through the splendid gateway, and into the park by the river, lent for your pleasure by the Marquis of Bristol. If on your way you stop at the book-shop in Abbeygate Street whose name I have forgotten (they should have put a little tab within my copy) and buy Mr. Dutt's guide to Bury—one of the "Homeland Handbooks"—you will find at page 36 a reconstruction of the Abbey as it used to be; and as you sit among the roses which strew their petals, white and red, among its stones, you may listen to Carlyle:

Another world, truly: and this present poor distressed world might get some profit by looking wisely into it, instead of foolishly. But at lowest, O dilettante friend, let us know always that it *was* a world, and not a void infinite of grey haze with fantasms swimming in it. These old St. Edmundsbury walls, I say, were not peopled with fantasms; but with men of flesh and blood, made altogether as we are. Had thou and I then been, who knows but we ourselves had taken refuge from an evil Time, and fled to dwell here, and meditate on an Eternity, in such fashion as we could? Alas, how like an old osseous fragment, a broken, blackened shinbone of the old dead Ages, this black ruin looks out, not yet covered by the soil; still indicating what a once gigantic Life lies buried there! It is dead now, and dumb; but was alive once, and spake. For twenty generations, here was the earthly arena where painful living men worked out their life-wrestle—looked at by Earth, by Heaven and Hell. Bells tolled to prayers; and men, of many humours, various thoughts, chanted vespers, matins—and round the little islet of their life rolled forever (as round ours still rolls, though we are blind and deaf) the illimitable Ocean, tinting all things with *its*

THE ABBEY GATE, BURY ST. EDMUNDS

eternal hues and reflexes; making strange prophetic music! How silent now; all departed, clean gone. The World-Dramaturgist has written: *Exeunt* . . .

The "Past" of "Past and Present" is, of course, the reconstruction of the "once gigantic Life," with the aid of Jocelin:

Jocelin's Book, the "Chronicle," or private Boswellian Notebook, of Jocelin, a certain old St. Edmundsbury Monk and Boswell, now seven centuries old, how remote it is from us; exotic, extraneous; in all ways, coming from far abroad! The language of it is not foreign only, but dead; Monk-Latin lies across not the British Channel, but the Nine-fold Stygian Marshes, Stream of Lethe, and one knows not where! . . . This Jocelin, as we can discern well, was an ingenious and ingenuous, a cheery-hearted, innocent, yet withal shrewd, noticing, quick-witted man; and from under his monk's cowl has looked out on that narrow section of the world in a really *human* manner; not in any *simial*, canine, ovine, or otherwise *in*human manner—afflictive to all that have humanity! The man is of patient, peacable, loving, clear-smiling nature; open for this and that. A wise simplicity is in him; much natural sense; a *veracity* that goes deeper than words. Veracity: it is the basis of all; and, some say, means genius itself; the prime essence of all genius whatsoever . . .

That is all that I may quote. Open the book in the garden which was once the old Abbey, and the roses bend before the exclamatory breeze, the rush of apoplectic phrases; as somebody said of Victor Hugo, "What a wind!"

With Mr. Dutt, however, one is in safer waters and runs less risk of being blown away. He tells about St. Edmund and the relics, about the churches

and the town, about Moyses Hall—once a synagogue and now a museum—about the Thing-How, about the house in Northgate Street where FitzGerald went to school, in such a pleasant, friendly, and yet comprehensive way as to make my own small stock of notes seem pitifully weak. I shall dismiss them, then, in favour of his guide ; and only make a small addition in regard to the " Pickwick Papers " and the Angel Inn.

For not only do we remember that Mr Pickwick traversed the same road by coach that I described by lorry, though in the reverse direction, but various of his best adventures were at Bury. Of the road there is a page of Dickens's description. The influence of the scenery, we learn, " was not lost upon the well-regulated mind of Mr. Pickwick." Even though meditating on the nefarious Jingle, " at last he derived as much pleasure from the ride, as if it had been undertaken for the pleasantest reason in the world.

" ' Delightful prospect, Sam,' said Mr. Pickwick.

" ' Beats the chimbley pots, sir,' replied Mr. Weller," and then launched into the anecdote about the " twopenny rope." This loquacious discourse continued until " the coach rattled through the streets of a handsome little town, of thriving and cleanly appearance, and stopped before a large inn situated in a wide open street, nearly facing the old abbey.

" ' And this,' said Mr. Pickwick, looking up, ' is the Angel. We alight here, Sam. But some caution is necessary. Order a private room, and do not mention my name. You understand.'

" ' Right as a trivet, sir,' replied Mr. Weller, with a wink of intelligence . . . "

So—and the description given will place it accurately—we have here one of the best inns which Dickens has made famous. The first thing which Pickwick did—or rather which Sam did for him—was the ordering of dinner ; after which Sam retired to spend the evening in his own way, and so thoroughly that he found a "halfpenny shower-bath" necessary on the morning after. You may still see the pump where this libation was conferred.

As is natural in " Pickwick," the adventures followed thick and fast. Job Trotter comes into the scene, and the worthy Pickwick was lured into the dreadful situation at Westgate House (one of the schools which have made Bury famous for its educational advantages) where he had to face, in dead of night and in the rain, " the spinster lady of the establishment, three teachers, five female servants, and thirty boarders, all half-dressed, and in a forest of curl-papers." No sooner was this tangle straightened out, and the resulting rheumatism better, than came the shoot which Pickwick followed in the barrow, and which landed him at last within the Pound. There I shall leave him, in that village close to Bury—I think it was Troston—and turn to making some remarks about a forgotten poet of the region.

Some seven miles to the north-east of Bury lie two little villages, very different from the villages of Lavenham and Cockfield. They were still upon the uplands of West Suffolk ; Honington and

Troston look northward to the flats which formed the one time sea-floor of the Wash, the later meres and fens of Hereward, and now the golden plain which sweeps to Ely. At Honington was born the poet Robert Bloomfield, and he was at work as a farmer's boy, at Troston while Pickwick was in the Pound.

If you will turn to W. H. Hudson's "Afoot in England" you will find a pleasant chronicle of Bloomfield. I am not going to pretend that he was a great man, or that he cuts a place to be remembered in English poetry. He was, as Hudson says, but a small voice crying in the wilderness; but in the same essay we are told a little story of how that voice carried to a far distant land. It is one of the immaterial questions continually pricking the book-lover, to know the causes and the consequences of the travellings of little, entrapped sprites in boards. Bloomfield's verses were printed in that minute, newspaper print our great-aunts loved; they were bound, if I remember rightly, into a tiny volume, of red cloth with golden tracery; and, which is the point, somehow and unexpectedly one of these copies got as far as Buenos Ayres and was lying in the second-hand bookshop kept by a snuffy old German when Hudson, then a lonely boy, came in from the pampas to that city. There was something of the spirit in the book which brought this homely countryside of England very close to the boy who had heard of it, but never seen; and the mature tribute, written in that apparently easy vein of which Hudson had a unique mastery, is one of the pleasantest essays one could read.

As to the forgotten poet, "he had one thing in common with the best and greatest, the feeling of love and compassion for lower animals which was in Thomson and Cowper, and highest in Coleridge, Shelley and Wordsworth." He had likewise a pretty and archaic touch in life, reminiscent of Theocritus and Virgil. "The Farmer's Boy" is at his best, and the best of "The Farmer's Boy" is on the Suffolk cheese. He laments the greed of London in draining the countryside of produce, and in making the Suffolk dairy wives run mad for cream, leaving nothing but "three-times skimmed sky-blue" to make the cheese for local use. The cheese so made, continues the poem, turns the strongest blade; it is at last flung in despair into the hog-trough, where:

> . . . it rests in perfect spite
> Too big to swallow and too hard to bite!

Suffolk and Essex cheeses in past time (not in present) have borne numerous reproaches. It may be that Bloomfield translated his idea from an older rhyme in which the cheese speaks for itself:

> Those that made me were uncivil,
> They made me harder than the devil.
> Knives won't cut me, fire won't sweat me,
> Dogs bark at me, but can't eat me.

Gate-pegs in Suffolk were once made of cheese, and once we heard the rumour that cheese had been tried for tombstones in an older century, but was discarded as being too difficult to carve. Let us haste away from such a subject, recalling as we fly that even good-hearted Pepys speaks about "grumbling to eate Suffolk cheese."

IPSWICH

IT is not with the idea of forgetting the interior of Suffolk that I am switching from Bury back to Ipswich, but rather to compare the towns. They are very different in their attitude to life. On the surface Bury is the more attractive. It is more restful, more composed, and reminiscent of Jocelin and Abbot Samson. There is not the same hum and drive of trade about it. It is cleaner, likewise. In Ipswich one has to look more carefully for the past. The first street which you cross in coming from the station is Commercial Road, and a dingy road it is; but that is no real reason for despairing. Even that road is a by-product of the harbour, and the harbour a by-product of such ships as the old "Thomas of Ipswich," which took part in Frobisher's third voyage. The dreams and visions of Cathay lead most insidiously to Commercial Roads. It is sometimes shortsighted not to trace the connexion back.

It would be just, however, to begin with a paragraph more stimulating than that. Let me begin another tack, whose outline I can compress in three words. Pickwick stayed here. In fact, as you remember from Chapter XXII of the "Papers," the estimable gentleman once set out

specially for Ipswich, starting by coach from the "Bull," Whitechapel, in the early morning. During the greater part of the day he was beguiled by conversation with Sam Weller and Mr. Magnus, and at nightfall they arrived in the main street of Ipswich. Dickens is the most accurate of guides on this occasion:

> In the main street of Ipswich, on the left-hand side of the way, a short distance after you have passed through the open space fronting the Town Hall, stands an Inn known far and wide by the appellation of "The Great White Horse," rendered the more conspicuous by a stone statue of some rampacious animal with flowing mane and tail, distantly resembling an insane cart-horse, which is elevated above the principal door. The Great White Horse is famous in the neighbourhood, in the same degree as a prize ox, or county paper-chronicled turnip, or unwieldy pig—for its enormous size. Never were such labyrinths of uncarpeted passages, such clusters of mouldy, ill-lighted rooms, such huge numbers of small dens for eating and sleeping in, beneath any one roof, as are collected together between the four walls of the "Great White Horse" at Ipswich.

If you come an hour before the time that Pickwick arrived at Ipswich—that is to say, an hour before dinner-time—you can make one small excursion before thinking of that meal with him. I think the visit should be to the Ancient House. There are many ancient houses, no doubt; but there are none more interesting than that within a stone's throw of the "White Horse." From the inn we retrace our steps for a few paces along Tavern Street; the second turning on the left—Dial Lane—leads into the Butter Market; on the corner,

facing us, we see the soft twilight upon the beautiful façade. Winter or summer it is always a pleasure to steal down Dial Lane, with the church on one hand and overhanging houses on the other, and to glance at the sight opposite. The first glance calls for a second—the second for a third: always there is some new item of interest in the details of the figured walls with their pargeting.

The house itself, built and added to during a long period of years, was an example of "post and pane" work—first a post and then a panel—when Elizabeth's reign came in. Custom would then have such houses plastered or pargeted, since the old construction was so draughty, and the front took on a new appearance. What is chiefly interesting about the change is the modelling of figures in relief, raised out of the plaster.

On the north front are four bay windows, and on the west a single one. Under these windows are figured (taking them in succession from the east) first *Europe*, with a church, a cornucopia, a sceptre, and a horse's head. It is an extraordinary horse's head. If Dickens could make rampacious statements about the respectable emblem of the inn (though it is possible that emblem has changed since his day), it would have been interesting to have his adjective for this one. However, *Asia* comes next with a mosque and a camel, whose ill-proportions are the more excusable because they were less available for reference. Then *Africa*, with the sacred phœnix, an umbrella, and a crocodile. Last of all, *America*, a lonely savage with weapons

THE ANCIENT HOUSE, IPSWICH

and a tobacco pipe. Instead of religious tokens, if we except the pipe, he has only his dog. Mr. Redstone aptly quotes Pope in this connexion:

> Lo, the poor Indian . . .
> He asks no Angel's wing, no Seraph's fire
> But thinks, admitted to the equal sky,
> His faithful dog shall bear him company . . .

The American who takes this as a slight finds his revenge around the corner. There is Atlas with the world upon his shoulders, almost falling out of the plaster beneath the weight; but the scene I refer to particularly is to the left of Atlas, and is taken from the first Eclogue of Virgil, where Tityrus pipes under his beechen bower and disconsolate Melibœus drives his flock by, and speaks forlornly of wandering to Britain:

> . . . sunder'd once from all the human race.

Most striking of all the figures in the pargeting is the central plaque of the north front—the arms of Charles II. The faithful take this to be emblematic of a visit by the hunted king after the battle of Worcester. The story runs that the king was smuggled into the Ancient House, stayed in hiding in a upper room, which is also called the chapel, and at last made his escape through an underground and secret passage to the harbour. One may form a pretty picture of the incident. Six troopers were next door, but next door was (and is) the Waggon Inn; hence they were incapacitated. Meanwhile Charles slips in and away. . . .

Sceptics may point out that Ipswich was not a

likely stopping point for the king in hasty flight from Worcester Field and via Bristol to Rouen; and it is only fair to add that the secret passage has never been discovered. But the Eastern Counties have always been the home of strong convictions. Traditional faith stands up valiantly against reason. In the lower part of the house Mr. Harrison's bookshop generously guards both flanks of the opposing parties; for the prettiest shop-girl in his employ told me the tale, and at the same time sold me a book contradicting it. My only word is that the legend gains nothing by the criterion of truth. There is a sufficient atmosphere about the old beams to make it coherent to the imagination.

There are many little stories of this part of Ipswich which will repay investigation. The Butter Market, for instance, was once used for selling fish; and squabbling was continuous in those days because the filth annoyed church-goers and made the naves alive with fishy smells. The Waggon Inn has various associations, and the house just opposite the Ancient House was likewise an inn at one time, where (I think) Chaucer's father was a vintner. Not far away is Wolsey's Gate, in College Street; and his birthplace (sceptics again enter asking proof, but tradition resists them) is now a chemist's shop, with a curious carved corner post, just opposite the stage door of the Hippodrome. But we have a dinner waiting. Back to Pickwick.

"On this request [for dinner] being preferred,"

says Dickens, " the corpulent man condescended to order the boots to bring in the gentlemen's luggage, and preceding them down a long dark passage, ushered them into a large badly furnished apartment, with a dirty grate, in which a small fire was making a wretched attempt to be cheerful, but was fast sinking beneath the dispiriting influence of the place. After the lapse of an hour, a bit of fish and a steak were served up to the travellers, and when the dinner was cleared away, Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Peter Magnus drew their chairs up to the fire, and having ordered a bottle of the worst possible port wine, at the highest possible price, for the good of the house, drank brandy and water for their own." So the chapter leads up, by way of Mr. Magnus's secret, to Pickwick's romantic adventure with the middle-aged lady in yellow curl-papers. How famous has this adventure made the inn! Compared to the notorious scandal, none of the rebuffs that Dickens gave it have had any effect. This same affair, with the lady all unwittingly before the glass and Pickwick's horrified and night-capped head emerging from the bed-curtains, caused a complete and imitation inn to be erected at the Chicago World's Fair, four thousand miles away.

One can follow Dickens in detail as to adventures in Ipswich. In St. Clement's Lane, off Fore Street, Sam Weller saw Job Trotter coming out of the green garden gate. Then there is the scene of Sam's attack on the executive, which Cruikshank illustrates :

Mr. Weller returned by knocking him down out of hand ;

having previously, with the utmost consideration, knocked down a chairman for him to lie upon . . .

Or, for the more sentimental, there is the pretty Suffolk housemaid :

" There was something behind the door, sir, which perwented our getting it open, for ever so long, sir," replied Sam.

I think we all remember what this something was, the first passage of Mr. Weller's first love, leading to the laborious concoction of the poetical valentine. This valentine made Mr. Weller, senior, call for " a double glass o' the inwariable " ; when written it was folded in a very intricate manner and a down-hill direction squeezed into the corner :

To Mary, Housemaid, at Mr. Nupkins's Mayor's, Ipswich, Suffolk.

One could like the town merely for providing that address.

After tracing Dickens' trail in Ipswich, I may enter a few words about a less famous author. His name is Richard Cobbold, better known since his revival in the " World's Classics." Many greater men and many more acute minds have been associated with Ipswich in its long career as a manufacturing and trading centre ever since, in Kipling's phrase, the Danes blew in ; but of all these none has had a name more pleasantly Suffolk than the name of Cobbold. John Cobbold —to begin with the father—was master of the Cliff Brewery ; still will you see the cheerful name over most Suffolk inns. Like Chaucer, Richard

came of bonded stock; but unlike in this—he was one of the last of twenty-two children. He entered the world to find ten nephews and nieces waiting for pocket-money from him. This is all by the way, but leads up to his quiet life as a clergyman who wrote a variety of books, notably "Margaret Catchpole" and "Freston Tower."

"Three personalities interest us in reading the novel of 'Margaret Catchpole'—the author, the heroine, and the author's mother, in whose service the real Margaret Catchpole was employed." So begins Mr. Clement Shorter in an introduction to the book. Of the mother, we hear she is represented, and hope only caricatured, in "Mrs. Leo Hunter" of the "Pickwick Papers"; of the heroine, she "is one of the few heroines of fiction of whom one loves to remember that she was real flesh and blood." Very briefly, she was a servant girl in love with a smuggler, and there was an excise officer in love with her. She was a good servant, saving her master's children from various accidents and drownings; she was a good lover, which led her to all manner of adventures. They culminated in her stealing a horse and riding to London, having borrowed man's attire, in ten hours. This was in the time when horse-stealing meant a penalty of death, and she was so condemned. By the kind efforts of the Cobbolds the sentence was altered to transportation, but Margaret remained in the meanwhile for three years in Ipswich Jail, uncertain of her fate. Then her smuggler-lover persuaded her to escape. She

climbed over the prison wall at midnight and with him fled to the sea at Sudbourn. She was re-captured, her lover killed, and she and her adventures this time effectively transported to Botany Bay.

But no rapid summary can give an idea of Margaret; it is folly to try. At the Ipswich Museum there is on view the following letter from the servant to the mistress, written just before the exile. The letter comes into the novel, but unfortunately in a doctored version:

ipswich May 25th 1801
honred madam

i am sorrey i have to inform you this Bad newes that i am going away on wedensday next or thursday at the Longest so i hav taken the Liberty my good Ladey of trobling you with a few Lines as it will Be the Larst time i ever shall trobell you in this sorrofoll Confinement my sorrows are very grat to think i must Be Banished out of my owen Countreay and from all my Dearest friendes for ever it is very hard inded for any one to think on it and much moor for me to enduer the hardship of it honred madam i should Be very happey to see you on tuesday Befor i Leve englent if it is not to much trobell for you for i am in grat confushon my self now my sorrowes are dobbled i must humbly Beg on your Goodness to Consider me a Littell trifell of monney it wold Be a very Great Comfort to your poor,

unhappy searvent
Margreat Catchpole

I wish we could consider that Margaret's "trobells" ended as they do in the novel, where the excise officer, a very decent chap, turns up in Botany Bay and they start afresh by marrying and living happily. But for this, as Mr. Edward Clodd tells me, there is no evidence. The formation

of a Catchpole Research Committee led to the discovery of a single entry in the register of St. Peters, Richmond, New South Wales, as follows: "Margaret Catchpole, aged 58 years, came prisoner in the 'Nile' in the year 1801, was buried May 14th, 1819."[1]

The novel then improves the facts; it is written in a style delightfully old-fashioned, with a continual feast of unexpected phrases. For this part of Suffolk it is, as Mr. Shorter justly says, the classic novel. It gives anecdotes about the smuggling days; about the Cat House at Woolverstone, where a large white cat (stuffed) was used as a smuggling signal; about the raid at Shinglestreet and the cave in Bawdsey Cliff; about the Orwell and the mad Robinson Crusoe; about Walton Castle, Butley Abbey, Felixstowe, Orford, and Rushmere Heath, and Brandeston, and many other places. I can recall the delight of reading the book by the roadside, on summer afternoons and in the intervals of cycling; and the only complaint was that the north side of the River Orwell was so much exclusive private ground that I could not easily identify some of the localities and picture all the scenes.

The other novel, "Freston Tower," though less adventurous and less obtainable, is of interest as the author's version of Wolsey. One would not put too much emphasis upon its historical accuracy, and it omits such shady features of the Cardinal's life as his detention in the stocks at Limington. (This picturesque incident, I admit, may be just

[1] "Pall Mall Gazette," 31 May, 1911.

as apocryphal as some of the stories Cobbold tells.) Yet for a sail down the river to Harwich or to Felixstowe the story is more than mildly interesting. On the south bank is Freston Strand, and Freston Tower is still standing. It was built by Latimer for Ellen de Freston, as a place for her to study; so the "Fair Ellen," as Cobbold calls her (and I am swallowing his facts whole), dedicated each room of the six to a different "pursuit":

> The lower room, to charity, from 7 to 8 o'clock
> The second, to working tapestry, from 9 to 10
> The third, to music, from 10 to noon
> The fourth, to painting, from 12 to 1
> The fifth, to literature, from 1 to 2
> The sixth, to astronomy, at even . . .

So runs his catalogue; in reading it we must remember the Fair Ellen was only thirteen at the time. After several busy years made up of these busy days, she married the man who had prescribed them.

Around Freston Tower still clings beauty and a touch of romance; a faint remembrance too of Wolsey as an unsuccessful suitor. I can never quite determine which is the better of the two approaches by water or by land. For though the first is the old way, and stately barges were rowed down here from Ipswich, the latter permits the return through Gainsborough Lane, which he painted in "The Market Cart." It is a leafy, shadowed passage, richly coloured with all the tints of Suffolk summer, with green and gold and ruddy brown, and the blue waves of Orwell dancing just beyond.

THE MARKET CART

From the Painting by Gainsborough in the National Gallery

WOODBRIDGE AND THE DEBEN

THE American author of "Shandygaff" gives a pleasant description of Woodbridge as the prelude to a sketch of John Loder, an old inhabitant and one of FitzGerald's friends. He writes from New York:

There is a little Suffolk town on the salt tidewater of the Deben, some ten miles from the sea. Its roofs of warm red tile are clustered on the steep hill-slopes that run down toward the river; a massive, grey church tower and a great windmill are conspicuous landmarks. Broad barges and shabby schooners, with ruddy and amber sails, lie at anchor or drop down the river with the tide, bearing the simple sailormen of Mr. W. W. Jacobs's stories. In the old days before the railway it was a considerable port and a town of thriving commerce. But now—well, it is little heard of in the annals of the world.

Yet Woodbridge, unknown to the tourist, has had her pilgrims, too, and her nook in literature. It was there that George Crabbe, of Aldeburgh, was apprenticed to a local surgeon and wrote his first poem, unhappily entitled "Inebriety." There lived Bernard Barton, "the Quaker Poet," a versifier of a very mild sort, but immortal by reason of his friendship with greater men. Addressed to Bernard Barton, in a plain, neat hand, came scores of letters to Woodbridge in the eighteen-twenties, letters now famous, which found their way down the winding Thoroughfare to Alexander's Bank. They were from no less a man than Charles Lamb. . . . And as the birthplace and home of Edward FitzGerald, Woodbridge drew such visitors as

Carlyle and Tennyson, who came to seek out the immortal recluse. . . .

Some day, if you are wise, you too will take a train at Liverpool Street, and drawn by one of those delightful blue locomotives of the Great Eastern Railway you will speed through Colchester and Ipswich and finally set foot upon the yellow pebbled platform[1] at Woodbridge. As you step from the stuffy compartment the keen salt Deben air will tingle in your nostrils ; and you may discover in it a faint underwhiff of strong tobacco—the undying scent of pipes smoked on the river wall by Old Fitz, and in recent years by John Loder. . . .

In such manner is Woodbridge described by the pen of a lover far away. " Poets," says Mr. Dutt, in his East Anglian " Highways and Byways," " have always loved it. . . . I cannot imagine that Woodbridge played any active part in the stirring events of East Anglian history ; it seems almost incredible that in the old days warships were built at its quiet quays." He goes on to praise its " selfishness," which " nearly approaches to being a virtue," in keeping its good things to itself and refusing to advertise. Mr. E. F. Benson's adjective is " self-contained."

Well, the War (with the aerodrome on Martlesham Heath) provided some stirring moments ; the Zeppelins contributed—one bomb (a dud) fell in the garden of the Mr. Loder above mentioned, and the old man of ninety, for long a familiar figure in the town, was with difficulty restrained from

[1] This a pardonable transfer in memory. The platform is not pebbled ; nor are the locomotives now the old " delightful blue." I hope they may return to the colour some time.

rushing out and seizing it with his gnarled hands. But it is of the quiet side of Woodbridge that I like to speak. If it is fair to break into the sequestered close (it must be done with tact) there is no more perfect example of English country peacefulness than Woodbridge.

Even Old Fitz was led to live here a recluse despite the dual character of his life. The Woodbridge half was spent as Tennyson describes him :

> Old Fitz, who from your suburb grange,
> Where once I tarried for a while,
> Glance at the wheeling Orb of Change,
> And greet it with a kindly smile ;
> Whom yet I see as there you sit
> Beneath your sheltering garden-tree,
> And watch your doves about you flit,
> And plant on shoulder, hand and knee . . .

All of his haunts are easily to be found—the " suburb grange " is at the head of the main street, just before it becomes the Melton Road. Turning sharply to the left about a hundred yards down the side road stands the Little Grange, upon the left-hand side, much the same as when he left it for the last time. For there is pathos in this sweetest of all Tennyson's letters. It begins as above ; to quote one more passage :

> . . . But we old friends are still alive,
> And I am nearing seventy-four
> While you have touched at seventy-five,
> And so I send a birthday line
> Of greeting ; . . .

It was a greeting never received ; Old Fitz had left the grange for a visit in Norfolk, and there he

died before the volume of verses ("Tiresias"), intended for his birthday, could come out.

As has been said, his life in the many Woodbridge haunts—at Bredfield White House, at Boulge (Bowidge) Cottage, at Farlingay Hall with Carlyle, and on the Market Hill—was uneventful. Here was he the recluse, intent upon reading (or being read to, when his eyes gave out) and music. In Woodbridge "The Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám" was composed; when not engaged with that or other literary work he pruned his roses and, in Mr. Gosse's phrase, made "discreet journeys in uneventful directions." Sometimes he would go for long, rambling walks through the town or country, attired always with delightful disregard of custom. Mr. Hindes Groome describes him "with an old Irish cape, double-breasted, flowered satin waistcoat, slippers on feet, and a handkerchief, very likely, tied over his hat." There are many left in Woodbridge who remember him and will confirm this—I stayed once for some weeks with one dear lady who added a blue-green shawl to the description, a large black dog, and the fact that the stockings on the slippered feet were usually —she said always—out at heel. He would stop the children of the town to ask the oddest questions, and send them off with the odd change, or the odd peppermints, in his pocket. And yet however eccentric he had rarely less than perfect courtesy. He said of his own family, "We are all mad, but with this difference—*I* know that I am."

As to the other half of Fitz's life, in which this

same recluse showed he loved the sea, and loved it best when it was rough, and sailed it reckless with the best of Lowestoft men, we shall have to wait—even though his boats, notably the "Scandal," lay much at Woodbridge—until we come to Lowestoft.

While in the quiet little town we should make certain pilgrimages. Though there are other memories, and it appears in other literary channels —in Mr. Benson's "Mike" and Mr. Jacobs's "Skipper's Wooing"—those most peculiar to it are the ones of Omar. Going to Bredfield House, where Fitz was born, we shall pass the home of Seton Merriman, remembering his years at Woodbridge; but the best pilgrimage is to Boulge Church, with the grave where still a rose-tree blooms—the original was brought by admirers from the grave of the tent-maker of Naishapur. We may walk to Ufford, where Miss Mary Cholmondeley lives (her charming book "Notwithstanding" is about Ufford), and find the house, near the Post Office, where Fitz had his adventure with the ink. Perhaps of all the anecdotes about him this is the least known.

With Robert Hindes Groome (lovingly sketched in "Two Suffolk Friends") FitzGerald called on Captain Brooke at Ufford. The drawing-room had been newly refurnished, and Fitz sat himself down upon an amber satin couch. The conversation waxed and waned under these good talkers; but in a lull there happened to be seen a thin black stream which trickled across the glorious sheen of the couch, and dropped—spattering—upon the

gallant carpet. It came from a penny bottle of ink, which Fitz had bought in Woodbridge and put in a tail pocket. The ignominy, mind you, of a *penny* bottle! I wonder what was said; perhaps it was Fitz to remark he had Omarred the couch.

Some day, if you are wise. . . . There is so much to see in Woodbridge; microscopic views, intertwined with anecdote. Ipswich has changed —Woodbridge has not. Only one think about it I regret: the house on Market Hill where Fitz lived (it is marked by a tablet) should, I think, be held by a tobacco merchant. Perhaps Mr. Nunn, the genial plumber, will some day trade with a divan-holder. Then could we enter it to purchase some small token—a clay pipe of the Dutch model, possibly—and chat a while.

Yet it must not be thought that Woodbridge depends on Fitz for all its charm. It is, if I may say so in a phrase, the embodiment of all the best and pleasantest in small Suffolk towns. It is the centre for exploration of the Suffolk moors and lanes and rivers. The epicure in towns will always have his pet time of day to visit them. I said that Ipswich is best in the evening; Woodbridge is best at any time there is high tide. And just one word about the lanes.

On a summer's day, cool enough for walking and yet warm for sitting down, the sky's blue is here relieved by flaky drifts of white; as if the soft crystals of a snowstorm had been carried upwards and clung reversed above us, moulded by winds that do not blow down here, and able to melt at

pleasure only to re-form again at will. After a cheerful tea, at which you will do well to call for Seager's potted meat, the day invites exercise. It might be Orford, for its castle, its associations with Seton Merriman's " Last Hope," or Paterson's story of the " Watchers by the Shore." Again, it might be Bealings, with Sir Sidney Colvin's " Memories " in mind ; or Playford, recalling G. B. Airy, astronomer-royal, and Thomas Clarkson the abolitionist ; or Seckford Hall, to catch the Elizabethan spirit ; or Iken, which I should like to take, in the teeth of etymologists, to indicate an old haunt of the Iceni—Boadicea's tribe. In all of these there lie adventures, as even does the river wall to Melton, though it is but a step. Melton, alas ! has gone down in the scale of notoriety during the past hundred years. According to Kearsley's " Entertaining Guide," published in 1801 for the benefit of coaching travellers, Melton is mentioned for the residence of Dr. White, the " learned Professor of Arabic at Oxford " ; nowadays it is usual to remark that it has the county lunatic asylum.

In all of these there lie adventures, I repeat ; but this time we shall go to Martlesham, whether by bus or cycle or by foot.

Here the famous Red Lion mounts guard over the inn, a monstrous, bulbous beast whose forepart (all there is of him) projects as if he had been crossed with a strain of tremendous pouter pigeon. Let no such thought take away from his inspiring ferocity ; apart from sculpture this is conveyed by colour. There is no coined word for it. His is no watery rainbow red, or trivial cochineal, or

simple scarlet, or mere vermilion, crimson, brick, maroon, or any other of the uncompounded sanguinary hues. During a long life he has passed through each phase in turn. In youth—some say he was a figure-head of one of Spain's Armada, others that he came from a Dutch warship captured at Sole Bay—he was, it is true, a sort of shrimpish salmon tint. Whether Castile or Zuyder-coloured, makes no difference; the point is he was then pale. He bore in foreign hands only the blush of promise. But since that whelp-hood, like the Laplander in winter, he has put on an infinity of coats without taking any off. Were you to wound him, nothing but paint could be discovered inches down. He is the sum of all his many coloured tinctures; he is the reddest red possible—Martlesham red, please; and in comparison with aniline confections and outlandish washes he is to be taken as the ruddy standard.

Passing this beast with the above thoughts (many more eloquent will be evoked) we may turn to the left and breast a little hill which looks back across the flats where dallies the creek of Martlesham. Over the meadowland a toy train puffs along in mid-air on its upraised track; behind, the elm- and oak-green hills hide Woodbridge; to the right the sun plays his fantasy upon the blue of river Deben and the Sutton woods beyond, where fairies dwell. We cannot help quoting Fitz once more:

> And away to the meadows,
> The meadows again.

Away to the meadows, and the lanes along the

Deben! Time and again have men tried to compute the peculiar magic of these lanes, when blue air is soft, and the green hedgerows melt from holly, elm, and ivy into blackberry, hips (and haws) and every other version of "every bramble dear." No answer is succinctly given—no suggestion possible in any other than the rambling fashion of the lanes themselves. They are a lesson for essayists; inconsequential, gay, full of whims and fancies, discursive sermons, love and laughter hand in hand, crunching along together, winding into valleys, struggling up the slopes, curving coyly in the shadow round a private park to be confronted the moment after by a shameless pigsty in the sun. Of all English lanes I would commend the Suffolk ones.

Let me refrain from peroration, and turn back along the river wall past Kyson. The same writer that I quoted at the beginning of our visit puts it thus:

> Kyson—perhaps the tide will be out and sunset tints shimmer over those glossy stretches of mud. Brown seaweed, vivid green samphire, purple flats of slime; where the river ran a few hours before, a steel-grey trickle of water in the scour of the channel and a group of stately swans ruffling there; and the huddled red roofs of the town with the stately church tower and the waving arms of the windmill looking down from the hill—it is a scene to ravish an artist.

It is; tide in or tide out, I am loath to leave Woodbridge.

THE SUFFOLK INTERIOR

WHEN I do so at last, it will be north-easterly along the coast; but I have been skipping in undue haste the interior of the country. There "Sely Suffolk" or "Happy Suffolk" still remains untouched. There are still the yokels whom Mr. Groome quotes—this particular occurrence took place at Monk Soham, not far from Debenham.

Over the fields came floating a balloon; the pilot, at a loss for landmarks, was drifting low. Seeing a row of harvesters, he leaned over the edge of his car and shouted down to them, "Where am I?" Glad to release the strain upon their backs, they all stood up at once, pointed unanimously their forefingers at him, and shouted back in chorus "Yeou're in a ballune, bor!" . . . And there are still old women such as the one who warned her daughter, about to travel for the first time by rail, "Whativer yeou do, my dear, mind yeou don't sit nigh the biler!"

Suffolk is as the South Folk were, in the interior. As they have been from time immemorial, *Old Sows* are used as cure for scrofula. The old sow is not quite what it sounds; she, if I may so speak, is the little insect called elsewhere the wood-louse, who rolls herself into a natural pill on being touched,

and is thus swallowed in her native state.[1] Still are there many stories of "frairies" and "Pharisees"; still the man who comes back late from the "pub" sees and hears "all manner o' what," and often is "ketched ahowd on by an owd ghost"; and though such stories are not told readily to the outsider, we should not be surprised to hear of witches. That witchcraft was so prevalent in the early days of New England may not be unconnected with the dark practice in East Anglia; for though I shall only speak of it in detail when we come to Hingham, in Norfolk, it must be always borne in mind that the East Coast supplied a great Colonial influence. Someone has said that the "American twang" is only "Suffolk spoiled." Without discussing whether it has been spoiled or improved, there are certainly some similarities in speech.

Of customs that may have been influential in literature, I like to recall the Suffolk fair where the prominent drinking-booth was labelled:

Rove not from Booth to Booth
But stop in here
Nothing excel the music
But the Beer.

Only in metrical expression does this differ from some of the sentiments in the "Rubáiyát." And, though unfortunately getting rarer, the peculiar

[1] In the "Compleat Angler," Izaak Walton gives the following mention of the same custom, attributing it to his enemies the Jews: "And yet it is thought that they, or some spirit worse than they, first told us that lice swallowed alive were a certain cure for the yellow-jaundice." (Chapter XI, "On the Tench.")

harvest festival deserves a mention. After the harvest, when the Hawkey time has come and the men sit round the long-expected supper, rises the favourite song. There is the usual pressing from the " Lord of the Faist," and the chosen member of the company stands up to begin :

> Laarn tew be wise
> Laaaaren teeeew be wise
> Larrrrrren tu beeeeeee wise !

This goes on till a voice cries out, " Will, come, dew you guv us more than that there, man, co' ! " No notice is taken. The singer goes on, only varying the stress laid upon the four words of each line. But at the last the " Dew you's " become general ; then the singer coolly sits down, saying with an air of authority, " *Larn that FUST !* "

Aside from the farm lands, the interior of Suffolk is made up of small towns. Mr. Dutt's description could not be better put. " Over the narrow streets," he says, " the upper storeys of old, half-timbered houses bend as though seeking support, after centuries of top-heaviness, against the walls across the way ; on the plastered shop fronts, on the brackets of the projecting latticed windows, and in the spandrels of old doorways leading into panelled halls and stone-paved courts, there are curious heraldic carvings reminding one of lords and abbots of feudal times ; here and there stands a guildhall almost unaltered since it was founded ; and not infrequently the massive fragments of a Norman castle amid huge earthworks establishes for the place an antiquity to which many a thronged

city has no claim. On market-day, when the old-fashioned farm-folk with corn samples in their pockets come to shake their heads over some 'new-fangled' American farming implement exhibited near the market cross or before the town hall, there is some slight stir in the usually silent streets, and country customers summon the listless tradesman from his 'living-room' behind the shop; but the stir is of as temporary duration as the breeze which sometimes ripples a calm lake on a sultry summer day: it soon passes, and all is still again. To say that these old towns are 'behind the times' is to tell only half the truth. Some of them seem to have lost all inclination to advance with the times hundreds of years ago."

Of these, the town Mr. Dutt proceeds to describe is Framlingham. Here is indeed a combination of sleepy provincialism and storied greatness. It was once the royal town of an East Anglian king; then it fell into the hands of a family with the auspicious name of Bigod. Hard fighters, hard riders, hard swearers, hard drinkers—they appear to have been the reality of the popular conception of robber barons. When the castle passed from their hands we hear of it again at the death of Edward VI. It became the rallying point of English Catholics who swarmed to Framlingham to offer service to Princess Mary. The then dense woods about the castle rang to the bugle of an armed camp; every road and woodland lane was guarded by her sentinels; and when the time was ripe, southward she moved her cavalcade from Framlingham,

riding to Aldgate, where the children sang their greetings and the streets were all a-flutter with gay flags.

In the church at Framlingham lies Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey. He was a Suffolk man by birth, and he is well remembered as the first English classical poet. To his contemporaries Surrey used to stand for the whole spirit of courtly love and knightly romance. The trappings of chivalry were becoming outworn in the sixteenth century, but they were real enough for Nashe to satirize. The occasion is a tournament, and I quote from "The Vnfortunate Traueller."

> The right honorable and euer renowned Lord *Henrie Howard* earle of Surrie my singular good Lord and master, entered the lists after this order. His armour was all intermixed with lillyes and roses, and the bases thereof bordered with nettles and weeds, signifieng stings, crosses, and ouergrowing incumberances in his loue, his helmet round proportioned lyke a gardners water-pot, from which seemed to issue forth small thrids of water, like citterne strings, that not onely did moisten the lyllyes and roses, but did fructifie as well the nettles and weeds, and made them ouergrow theyr liege Lords. Whereby he did import thus much, that the teares that issued from his braines, as those arteficiall distillations issued from the well counterfeit water-pot on his head, watered and gaue lyfe as well to his mistres disdaine (resembled to nettles and weeds) as increase of glorie to her care-causing beauty (comprehend vnder the lillies and roses). The simbole thereto annexed was this, *Ex lachrimis lachrimae.*

I shall not go on to copy how his horse was pounced and bolstered out in full proportion and shape of an estrich, nor describe the tedious

symbolism of that device. Nashe never loses wind when he begins to satirize, and I am by no means anxious for Surrey's memory to be severely ridiculed. He who prescribed

True wisdom join'd with simpleness

had a nice touch of humour to add to his gifts of song. This comes out in his notable answer to the Privy Council. He was a Knight of the Garter at the time, and had been brought up for breaking windows in the streets of London with a cross-bow in the dead of night. It is somewhere related that Sir Thomas More, usually the staid and sober Counsellor, was with him. It was for both, perhaps, a youthful version of

The night discharged of all care.

At any rate, to the solemn body sitting in judgment on him, Surrey declared that he had been grievously shocked by the licentiousness of the citizens, and thought that " by thus alarming them he might put them in mind of the suddenness of God's Judgments, and so wake them to repentance. . . ." The answer overwhelmed the Privy Council, and Sir Henry escaped punishment.

Yes, these little inland towns form a quiet countryside. They have changed very little since they sent out men like Surrey, and all those Suffolk names that ring like Suffolk church-bells in Hakluyt's pages of adventurous voyages. Very tame were their homes, very wild were their adventures, very peaceful their old age, if they returned. Richard Eden came from Sudbury, Fitch from Ipswich,

John Foxe from Woodbridge, Cavendish from Trimley—so may the pencil tick off many more. Hakluyt himself, though he was unable (or too canny) to get out amongst the hairbreadth escapes he chronicled, yet made sure of a Suffolk living (Wetheringsett) before he died.

Nor do we have to go so far back for adventure, though it seems often true that the farther away the story the more its glamour. Dallinghoo, in the eighteenth century, sent out a remarkable dynamo of energy in the shape of Francis Light. There was a cloud upon his birth, and he wandered forth to the as yet unknown Penang. There, under the East India Company, he became the first Governor. The story goes that he desired to clear the jungle, but ran up against religious scruples. Tree-worship was rife among the natives of the Malay Archipelago. Even to-day, to quote Frazer,[1] the Mandelings of Sumatra—just across from Penang—try to lay any blame from the felling of trees at the door of the Dutch authorities. " Thus when a man is cutting a road through a forest and has to fell a tall tree which blocks the way, he will not begin to ply his axe until he has said, ' Spirit who lodgest in this tree, take it not ill that I cut down thy dwelling, for it is done at no wish of mine but by order of the Controller.' And when he wishes to clear a piece of forest-land for cultivation, it is necessary that he should come to a satisfactory understanding with the woodland spirits who live there before he lays low their leafy dwellings. For this purpose he

[1] " The Golden Bough," (Abridged Edition, 1922), pp. 116, 117.

goes to the middle of the plot of ground, stoops down, and pretends to pick up a letter. Then unfolding a bit of paper he reads aloud an imaginary letter from the Dutch Government, in which he is strictly enjoined to set about clearing the land without delay. Having done so he says, 'You hear that, spirits. I must begin clearing at once or I shall be hanged.'" Francis Light was therefore under difficulties, even greater then than now; but he was resourceful. He loaded a gun with silver dollars and fired it into the virgin forest. Very soon, despite the superstition, there was no forest left; and he called the cleared ground Suffolk. There, with a princess of the blood, the daughter of the King of Quedah, he settled down and organized small wars on his own.

The elder son of this enterprising marriage was sent back to Suffolk to be educated. He lived at Thebarton Hall, near Leiston, where a Zeppelin was brought down in the War. He too had the roving blood. He led what he called "a wandering life that precluded all advantages," and was in forty-three actions of the Peninsular Campaign. For bravery and spirited deeds he had few rivals. Sir William Napier writes: "When nearly starved himself—all were so in the pursuit of Massena—he by some means obtained a loaf of bread, but learning that George and William Napier were hurt, he stifled his own craving, and at the end of a long march, risked his life, and his horse's life, by riding some twenty miles across the wild mountains of Condeixa, where, entering the half-ruined house in which the wounded brothers were lying, he without

a word threw down the loaf on one of their pallets, and, rushing out, returned to the army." He deserved, and won, a beautiful and wealthy wife. Eventually he went as the first Surveyor-General of South Australia, and laid out the capital—Adelaide. It is, perhaps, the best-planned of Australian cities. Living there upon his own allotment, he called his home "Thebarton"; this name persists among the suburbs.

So are there many place-names, many Suffolks in the world, which trace back to this quiet countryside. There is Suffolk County in Long Island, towards Oyster Bay. In our strange medley of America, it lies next to Nassau. But more in my mind at the moment is the little town of Suffolk in Virginia, not because I know the story of its naming, but because it came up recently in rather a curious way, connected with the siege of Richmond and the Civil War. To my lodgings came an old man, short, upright, and with bristling grey eyebrows arching over somewhat sunken sockets. His name I knew, and his family—both are remembered in one of these quiet Suffolk towns; and as he entered my door, he held up his right hand dramatically.

"This hand," he said, "has shaken the hand of Abraham Lincoln."

It was the first of several talks, in which I had the opportunity of verifying all his pension papers. It was true that he was a veteran of the Civil War, though he was quite frank in pointing out (sometimes with unconscious humour) that his service was not entirely creditable. He was born in 1843,

had been the black sheep of a respected family, and was packed off to the States. There were many adventures, into which I shall not go; he had a hard struggle; and when the war broke out he volunteered for the cavalry in order to get the bounty. An accident got him out of the service, but he heard there was an even larger bounty—I think eight hundred dollars—for the New York Infantry. He joined again, and I use the pseudonym which he adopted, "James Brown."

Part of the Northern Army was in winter quarters at City Point, and this is the tale Brown loves to tell. He was standing guard at some little distance from the centre of the camp, when up came a tall, gawky individual whom he had noticed, in his phrase, "mooching about."

"Well," said the stranger, "how do you like it?"

"Oh, all right," said Brown.

"Officers good to you?"

"Fair," said Brown, spitting on the ground.

"Food all right?"

"It ain't a bed o' roses."

"Well"—the stranger changed the subject—"do you know who I am?"

"No," said Brown.

"Never seen me?" he persisted.

Brown looked him over. Civilian clothes, somewhat dingy; tall and awkward, "hands like shoulders o' mutton and feet like fenders." (The old man brought out the phrases with a polish that came from many repetitions.)

"No," Brown said at last, "never saw you."

(Here the old man rose, planted his feet squarely, and drew up his five foot four in imitation of the character he was assuming.)

" I am ABRaHAM LINcoln, PRES-I-DENT of the U-nited States, COM-MANDer-in Chief of ALL Forces both by land AND sea. . . ."

(This in a tremendous voice, with the accents as I have tried to indicate.)

Brown saluted, and turned away, thinking the interview was over. But before he moved two paces, Lincoln called him back.

" Here ! " he said ; " *shake* ! "

With that conclusion to his story, the veteran seized my own hand, and wrung it up and down, as if to convey a virtue by the touch. . . . Though I have my doubts about the dramatic accentuation by Lincoln of his titles, I like to think the last phrase of the tale is true.

The story about Suffolk, Virginia, is not one for repetition ; but the old private, who still draws his pension regularly, had many such, and brought in characters who served with him, and who likewise had been mercenaries in the ranks. His chief comrade, whose real name was Spencer and who died of dysentery, came from Eyke.

I have been emphasizing only one side of the problem which makes Suffolk a most interesting study. Three adjectives to be stressed in speaking of the inland towns are *peaceful, sleepy, quiet.* For the men that I have mentioned as wandering far away, the adjectives might be *daring, combative, adventurous.* There are other outlets for abundant

energy—intellectual, for instance—and Suffolk's record here accentuates the antithesis. A stagnant population on the one hand, immaterially altered in the past hundred years; and on the other an energetic outburst quite phenomenal. Is there any plausible connexion? I do not know if it is fair to raise a problem without sketching a solution, but I leave it at that.

ALDEBURGH AND DUNWICH

WHENEVER FitzGerald grew weary of London fogs and crowds he used to speak with yearning for the "old flat land again, with a sight of the old sea . . . always talking to me, telling its ancient story." Again, and this time more localized, " There is no sea like the Aldeburgh sea—it talks to me." I have mentioned Carlyle as staying with FitzGerald at Woodbridge ; and it was natural that the host should bring the visitor to Aldeburgh. Of that excursion the Sage of Chelsea wrote enthusiastically to his wife, dating the letter from Farlingay Hall : " My notion is, if you have yet gone nowhere, you should think of Aldeburgh." I very nearly made the phrase " if you have yet gone nowhere " stand as title for this sketch.

Yet in a way it is rather striking that Carlyle should speak gently of the town, and call it beautiful. Many discriminating visitors, though they appreciate the sea and the air which (I quote Grant Allen) " exhilarates the heart of man (and woman) like the best Sillery," agree likewise with the literary scientist in calling Aldeburgh at best " paradoxically pleasant. Paradoxically pleasant, I say, because in its exterior appearance there is really nothing on earth visible to make it seem so."

Even Aldeburgh people will hardly disagree. Architecturally there is much positively painful. It shares the unpleasant wave of variegated brick buildings which spread over mid-Victorian England. I do not mean that all parts are unlovely. In the evening, to walk from the station past the waving arms of the windmill, past the church, which looks, in the half-light, like an enormous, silent, squatting cat, and down the hill into the main street—this is a path not devoid of imaginative beauty. But in general one may echo the opinion of a place " in which nothing commands one's love."

To tack a fitting distinction into that last phrase, I think one could well say " no thing, but many people." For if Aldeburgh shares some disadvantages it likewise shares some fine associations. I know of no small town in England which can boast of more interesting gatherings than those hinted at in Mr. Clodd's " Memories." A wealth of anecdote is there, woven round the genial hearth of Strafford House. In that house Grant Allen wrote what I have quoted from his story, " Kalee's Shrine," where the town is mentioned under a thin disguise ; and, at many times and over a long period of years, such visitors as George Gissing, George Meredith, Thomas Hardy, Walter Besant, Sir James Barrie, and W. W. Jacobs have stayed under the same roof. These are some—by no means all—of the literary representatives of what one might call " the old guard " who have strolled the same beach and watched the same sea with Mr. Clodd—the upright, friendly, warm-hearted figure who still pursues with undiminished enthu

siasm his many-sided interests. One wishes for another volume of such "Memories," to add, as he quotes, to "the publick stock of harmless pleasure." But even in sighing for the conversations which are lost, one brims with gratitude for those quite freely given. The scene, for instance, where Edward Whymper told the story of the Matterhorn to Thomas Hardy, with the little picture of the mountain-climber shelling shrimps and eating them with cream. Or of Meredith being wheeled to the quay at Slaughden, talking of Crabbe, and with a bunch of bladder-weed "held to his nose as if fragrant as the choicest attar. . . ." That was the last time Meredith was in Suffolk, a connexion he had formed early in his life by working for "The Ipswich Journal."

It was at Slaughden quay that George Crabbe, a native of Aldeburgh, rolled salt and butter barrels as a young man. By all accounts his boyhood was far from cheerful, and he very early learnt the sort of grim disparagement with which he looked at longshore life. We saw him making one effort to escape as an apothecary's assistant at Woodbridge, and writing verses there—his "Inebriety" from experience gained at Aldeburgh,

> Where the Cross-Keys and Plumbers'-Arms invite
> Laborious men to taste their coarse delight.

From Woodbridge he returned to Aldeburgh to "cure the boy Howard of the itch," and again slipped back to melancholy. He was not proud of his profession. He was poor, and could not marry the prudent lady of his choice; and it is related that on a gloomy day towards the close of

the year 1779 he strolled to a cheerless and bleak part of the cliff called the Marsh Hill. He was brooding, as he went, on the humiliating necessities of his position ; and, according to his son's description, " he stopped opposite a shallow, muddy piece of water, as desolate and gloomy as his own mind, called the Leech-pond, and ' it was while I gazed on it,' he said, . . . ' that I determined to go to London and venture all.' "

From that decision dated a long and for some time a bitter struggle, but he won a respite against circumstance. Through Burke's aid his poetry became popular, and its importance in the transition period is adequately recognized to-day. Clearly is the eighteenth century stamped upon his style, and the nineteenth on his sincere way of seeing things. I remember marking how particularly true to Aldeburgh is the little grating roar of the undertow acting upon the steep, shingled beach, where the waves curl back in cobra fashion before they lash the shore, and where, as Crabbe says of them,

> Curl'd as they come, they strike with furious force,
> And then re-flowing, take their grating course,
> Raking the rounded flints . . .

For the sea itself he had something of FitzGerald's feeling, studying carefully

> Its colours changing, when from clouds and sun
> Shades after shades upon the surface run. . . .

The town, the quay, the marshes—these he hated ; even though he noted every specimen of " the contracted Flora " ; but I think he had an inward hankering until the last for the shingled beach,

> With all those bright red pebbles, that the sun
> Through the small waves so softly shines upon. . . .

One time, at least, when he was living on the borders of Lincolnshire, he rode sixty miles to the coast in order to dip in the sea "that washed the beach of Aldeburgh."

After the first London success he came back to Aldeburgh for a time as curate, continually learning to trace his parishioners with the shrewd eye of a good novelist. His "hard, human heart" never let him laugh at them, even when describing the

> . . . wild, amphibious race,
> With sullen woe display'd in every face;
> Who far from civil arts and social fly,
> And scowl at strangers with suspicious eye.

They had, apparently, the well-defined suspicion of a smuggling people, and we again think of "Margaret Catchpole," or of FitzGerald's statement about "Kegs of Holland under the altar cloth of Thebarton church near by." They would have been poor soil for reform. He left without regrets on either side; but for all his distaste there were not wanting instances when he might have been worse treated. As a lonely and unhappy lad he was walking in the street; for some reason—perhaps Crabbe stared too earnestly at his scowling face while thinking of a descriptive adjective—another youngster whom we may specify in Crabbe's phrase as a "tall bully" offered to beat him; and, the good treatment entering the story here, another even bigger bruiser interfered on Crabbe's behalf with the remark, "You mustn't meddle with *him*; let *him* alone, for he ha' got larning."

On the strength of this protection those who have "larning" may wander back in safety up the hill, the moon rising over the sea, spreading there its narrow, silver carpet, and its light picking out the overtones of reds and yellows from the softened outlines of the houses; up the hill, past the cat-like church, which muses over the bust of Crabbe within it; and past the windmill, now motionless, once more to the station.

I have several times regretted flitting from Aldeburgh to town; and my pen had nearly run away with me along the accustomed rails. But there are cross-roads likewise by Aldeburgh station, and one branch leads north through Leiston, Thebarton, and Westleton to Dunwich. Of Dunwich, or Dunwich as it used to be, one or two words will not be taken amiss. The story, says the ancient chronicler, "will afford speculation sufficient to ruminate on the Vicissitude and Instability of Sublunary things."

Of the old and populous town, "surrounded with a stone wall and brazen gates," with its many houses dedicated to God, its hospitals, its palace for a king, mansion for a mayor, mint for coining its own money; with all its one-time stir and bustle from the harbour up the busy hillside to the markets; with its unnumbered crooked streets, down which its children used to play, and mothers used to call after them, and soldiers passed with gay catchwords and with tired feet; of this, the ruins of one solitary church remain, and crumble slowly over the cliff edge, to join all of the rest in

the sea below. That a town which under the Tudors was thrice the size that Ipswich was, and ranked in power with any in the country, should within a few hundred years—not thousands—be reduced to this deserted church, is what contributes to the " speculation sufficient to ruminate."

No one, I think, has described Dunwich with half the intensity and rhythmic sweep of Swinburne. Apart from the choruses in " Atalanta," Swinburne was at his best in East Anglia. " By observation, not naturalistic but spiritual, and by the emphasis of reverie and meditation, simple and conventional, but rapturous, he made that coast Swinburne's country *par excellence.*" So said Edward Thomas, a critic with a true romantic understanding ; and of all the coast it is only natural that Swinburne's first interest was Dunwich. For him " it was always the preterite that enthralled," as Mr. Beerbohm puts it.

We have Swinburne's description in both prose and verse. He speaks of " the dreary beauty, inhuman if not unearthly in its desolation, of the innumerable creeks and inlets, lined and paven with sea-flowers, which make of the salt marshes a fit and funereal setting, a fatal and appropriate foreground, for the supreme desolation of the relics of Dunwich. . . ." In verse there comes this answer to the age-old questioning of man :

> Here is all the end of all his glory—
> Dust, and grass, and barren silent stones.
> Dead, like him, one hollow tower and hoary
> Naked in the sea-wind stands and moans,
> Filled and thrilled with its perpetual story ;
> Here, where earth is dense with dead men's bones.

And he goes on, with couplets that sing like the sea-wind he loved :

> Low and loud and long, a voice forever,
> Sounds the wind's clear story like a song. . . .

until the ending of the mournful passage :

> Earth, and man, and all their gods wax humble
> Here, where Time brings pasture to the sea.

Swinburne was never more himself than by the sea ; and he was never more the poet than at Dunwich.

Each is free to choose his own time for meditation, but I quoted the old chronicler—Strickland—purposely for one word in his sentence. He spoke of " sublunary " things. The night is upon Dunwich, and only under the soft touch of the moon—a softer touch than that of Midas—do we see the ruins properly, and hear the ripples of the sea beneath, and the faint murmur of church-bells beneath the sea. Then, if one is quiet, comes a shadow for an instant borne upon the softest whir of wings—a Suffolk owl. Do you remember the old song ?

> Sweet Suffolk owl, so trimly dight
> With feathers like a lady bright,
> Thou singest alone, sitting by night,
> Te whit, te whoo !
>
> Thy note, that forth so freely rolls,
> With shrill command the mouse controls,
> And sings a dirge for dying souls,
> Te whit, te whoo !

It is an old song, and a pretty one. There used to be another old song, called " Dunwich Roses," but that is lost.

LOWESTOFT

LOWESTOFT is a good head-quarters for this part of the coast. Upon the south are Southwold, Walberswick, and Dunwich; Yarmouth and the Broads to the north. Consequently many people journey here for their vacations, and I wonder why so few stop on the way at Beccles. The Waveney Valley has been much written of, but it has not been spoiled. Beccles in itself is attractive, and we remember that the happiest moments of Crabbe's life were here, when he forsook his dock-labouring and walked all the way from Aldeburgh to meet Mira Elmy. These walks—or at least the emotions of the walks—he records in "The Lover's Journey." She was not wooed too easily, being "too prudent to marry until later when his position was assured." Fitz-Gerald, too, was here, "in the midst of *green idleness*," at Geldestone Hall. He describes the latter as "a houseful of the most delightful children," and speaks of the quiet life. "Wake in the morning at five—open the window and read Ecclesiasticus. A proverb says that 'everything is fun in the country.'"

So much for Beccles, though it deserves more mention. On second thoughts I remember why people stop so seldom. It is a junction. There are

very few with enough moral courage to miss a train deliberately ; and even while we hesitate, looking at the fields, the train comes in and spirits us away.

Crossing the marshes to Lowestoft, and coming to the narrow strip of Lake Lothing, one loses all sense of time. On land man disguises the passage of the centuries ; then looks at his own work and takes as evidence of age the tiny period he has accentuated. But the sea knows no time. A wave is not age-wrinkled. Even Framlingham does not go half so far back as such a town as Lowestoft or Yarmouth. The place of habitation changes with the shifting coast ; and time here is measured geologically, even though one may not care to take it farther than is humanly interesting. Without castellated towers or Norman machicolations we know the moment that we see the myriad masts " up-springing from the brimming plane of the harbour " (in Mr. Tomlinson's fine phrase) that these are but a modern fashion of an industry that comes from the coracles of the first savage Britons. And so, quite rightly, the station at Lowestoft is but a step from the fish markets.

As I crossed the London Road and walked down to the markets on the outer harbour, there were some things to think about. There used to be a place called " Easton Bavent " which was the easternmost place in England ; but the sea claimed it, and now Lowestoft " boasts that its Ness is England's easternmost point." The words are Mr. Dutt's, and he was writing to the effect that it was strange for no invading fleet to have bombarded

it. This was reprinted in 1914, but will have to be altered in the next edition of the "Highways and Byways"; for the bombardments of Lowestoft, particularly that of April 25, 1916, are not forgotten in the town; and you will still find, at Mr. Jenkins's shop for instance, pictures of the damage.

It is but a moment to the harbour. The little smacks, luggers, trawlers, and drifters that crowd it and anoint the air with smell of fish saw sterner service in the past few years.

> In Lowestoft a boat was laid,
> Mark well what I do say!
> And she was built for the herring trade,
> But she has gone a-rovin', a-rovin', a-rovin',
> The Lord knows where!

So began Mr. Kipling in a song to the East Coast Patrols. And we remember Captain David Bone's tribute in "Merchantmen-at-Arms," that splendid narrative of the merchant service during the war. He is speaking as the skipper of a big liner, one of a class of "foreign traders" who "had little to do with those whom (in our arrogance) we deemed the 'humble' fishermen." But he goes on to say: "At war, we have incurred debts. When peace comes and the seas are free again, we shall have memories of what we owe to the fishermen in all the varied services they have paid to us. The minesweepers toiling in the channels, that we may not meet sudden death; patrols riding out bitter weather in the open to warn us from danger, to succour and assist the remnants of our manning when a blow goes home. War has purged us of many old arrogant ways. When next we meet the

THE HARBOUR, LOWESTOFT

fishing fleet at peaceful work in the channels, we shall recall the emotion and relief with which we sighted their friendly little hulls bearing down to protect us in a menaced sea-way. We shall ' Keep clear o' th' gear when th' nets is down.' "

To the outsider the little hulls seem as many now, as tame, perhaps even as dirty and foul—they say harsh things who do not love the sea—as they were before the war. If so, it is a triumph of resilience. And even in broad daylight the harbour is thronged with masts that are not real, the ghosts of those drifters that went " a-rovin' " and did not come back. Sailors know that the sea-mews and gulls are old friends looking at them with other eyes—and you will see the Lowestoft sailors throw to the gulls their benison of fish.

At Lowestoft, as at Yarmouth, one does not want to forget the industry. It may be done, if one is callous towards fishing, for there are no scales on the south shore. But he who goes immediately to the promenade will miss the many bits of quaint story bound down with the salt and ice. There was the time, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, when the east coast herring trade was a matter of national attention. Illustrating this there is a story which in reality belongs to Yarmouth, but which shall enter here.

In the days that I am speaking of, even soldiers engaged in war had to observe the Lenten fasting. In 1429, Sir John Fastolf (of an old Yarmouth family, and a supposed original of Shakespeare's character) was serving at the siege of Orleans. On Ash Wednesday of that year he had charge of

a train of five hundred wagons of herrings on its way from Paris to the English camp. In all probability, as says Mr. Longe, his connexion with Yarmouth enabled him to get the supply "not altogether without profit to himself." But while Sir John was slowly jogging on, meditating on these profits, the French tried to ambush him. A terrific battle followed, but the wily knight formed his wagons into a "laager" and in spite of heavy odds the English archers began to do terrible execution. Their own number seemed to be doubled by the knowledge they were fighting both for soul and body. Finally they sallied forth, Sir John in the van and laying about him even better than his namesake. Turk Gregory never did such deeds in arms; it was no boy's play; honour pricked him on; and eventually he brought his herrings safe to camp. Such was the Battle of Herrings, "one of the most celebrated victories of the French wars."

From time immemorial there have been fisheries at Lowestoft, and there have likewise been those to praise them. But of these none have expressed themselves in anything approaching the manner of the old Lowestoft satirist, born here at the end of the sixteenth century. When we remember Nashe —which is too seldom—we usually think of him, along with Greene and Kyd, as writing bloodthirstily in some old Southwark inn. But in Lowestoft we recall his "Lenten Stuffe, or the Praise of the Red Herring, fitte of all clearkes of all noblemen's kitchens to be read, and not unnecessary by all serving men that have short board wages to be

remembered." One sentence will give the style, "fitte to be read, and not unnecessary to be remembered." It runs, "For our English Microcosmos or Phoenician Dido's hide of ground, no shire, county, county palatine, or quarter of it, but rigs out some oaken squadron or other to waft him along Cleopatraean Olympickly, and not the least nook or crevice of them but is parturient of the like super-officiousness, arming forth, though it be but a catch or pink, no capabler than a rundlet or washing bowl to imp the wings of his convoy." "Onely let this suffice," as he says, elsewhere, "for a tast to the text, and a bitte to pull on a good wit with, as a rasher on the coles is to pull on a cup of wine."

I have dwelt upon the fisheries because to one who loves the comings-in and goings-out even of little ships, Lowestoft is a breath, not exactly of Paradise, but of the waters that God moved on before there was an Eden. Because the ships are small is no disparagement. Joseph Conrad, arbiter of all craft, says that "Lowestoft was my spiritual birthplace." It was there that he first landed upon British soil and decided that it was good to stay upon. And while I mention landings it may be remembered that in 1784 John Adams, the first Ambassador of America to England, set foot ashore at Lowestoft.

That, however, is a digression. I was going to remark that the sailor's portion of the town may be reached by going down one of the narrow "scores," corresponding to the Yarmouth "rows," which lead down from High Street to the water. This part of

the town is aptly described by the phrase of Camden, the Elizabethan chronicler, who remarked that Lowestoft " hangs as it were over the sea." Here are nets, and tar, and longshore life all intertwined ; it has proved to many the most interesting part of the town.

But you will always come back to the harbour, to watch the Scotch fishing-girls at their autumn work, or the quick play of the gulls, or the Dutch or Lowestoft drifters. What matter if there is a fresh ozone in the air ? A little clean " smell o' fish " never hurt anyone. The longshoreman seems to thrive upon it, and to keep his boat so that " the least nook and crevice of it " bears witness to the nose. There was, on a certain date, one drifter particularly notable in this respect. She was coming in with plaice, their red spots shining as they were shovelled off, as if they were Argus-eyed and winking at the still redder sail which flapped upon an idle boom. And she *was* dirty ; seven men with seven mops were needed to restore her to anything approaching the condition a drifter should be in—to landlubber eyes and nose. Well, with the divine carelessness of sailormen, she was called " Sweet Heather."

This should not dismay the epicure. I spoke in some detail of FitzGerald as an epicure at Woodbridge ; we saw him likewise in " green idleness " at Beccles ; he has been so far what Mr. de la Mare calls him :

> The fastidious recluse
> Gentle, faithful, austere . . .

Yet in the second part of his dual life Fitz loved

Lowestoft harbour. Joseph Fletcher, the Lowestoft skipper whom Fitz nicknamed " Posh," was only one of many fisher-friends. " Somehow," he wrote from Lowestoft, " I always feel at home here." Here he kept the fishing-lugger he shared with Posh, and he used to sail here from Woodbridge in the " Scandal " on every opportunity. Lowestoft harbour is likewise the scene of the following story, sworn to by Posh.

The lugger lay ready to sail, with mainsail hoisted and the boom " wambling and jerking " in the fresh wind. FitzGerald was standing near the stern, dressed in his customary sea-going paraphernalia of top-hat and ladies' white boa, when a boy came running down to give him a letter. He opened it, and stood with it in both hands, reading. " Posh," he cried, " here's a letter with some money I never expected to get." As he spoke, over came the boom, caught him on the side of the head, and knocked him into the harbour. The submergence was complete. Then the surface of the yellow water creamed, and up came the top-hat gently, evenly, as if it had been a lifebuoy ; underneath the hat appeared the boa ; and underneath this last was Fitz. Here is the point Posh particularly swore to : the letter was still held out at arm's-length in both hands, as if he had been reading under water.

They sailed immediately after he was pulled aboard ; and, as they listed to the roll of the North Sea, Fitz took his old position in the lee scuppers. Refusing to change, he let the wash of the seas run over him, saying to all remonstrances, " I can't get any wetter, Posh ! "

Now let me turn to the more dignified south side of the town. Over the swing bridge is the esplanade and all the sunny foreshore of the shingled beach—the pier to the left. The breeze takes away all trace of fish ; once more we are prepared, like the lady who refuses onions, for polite conversation. That might profitably be on Lowestoft china.

The primitive pottery of the Iceni was most notable, according to such specimens as I have seen, for massive drinking goblets. Whether or not the same clay-beds were used, it is a token of advance that the first dated piece of the Lowestoft ware was an inkstand. This had upon it 1762, with the initials R.B. And yet the morals of the gentleman for whom the initials stood, the first manager of the new works, were perhaps not much of an improvement on those of the Iceni. In order to find out the best mixture of ingredients, R.B. went to London, disguised as a workman, engaged himself at one of the factories, and bribed his way into that room where the principal—after all the workmen had gone—was accustomed to perform the secret mixing process. Concealed under a hogshead close to the table, R.B. could see through an aperture all that went on ; and, having learnt the details, he returned to Lowestoft. After the inkstand had been made by the " borrowed " recipe, that business might always have a reminder of the acuteness of the manager, R.B. turned attention to the ware we know him by.

I mentioned that Lowestoft is reached from the south by crossing Lake Lothing, a narrow strip of

water which forms the inner harbour of the town. This communicates with Oulton Broad, the first I came to of the famous inland waterways of Norfolk. Technically it is still in Suffolk, but I shall make free to treat it as one of those characteristic of the northern county. And indeed the people are already the North Folk; you can hear the changed manner of speech—broad, as fits their rivers, and drawling, from the slow movements of the water. Also the character that we usually associate with Oulton Broad was himself a Norfolk man. He was the wanderer, George Borrow.

The isolated cottage where he lived and wrote has been pulled down, but his summer-house, scene of many musings, yet remains. Indeed, we can well spare the cottage, having the little vine-covered octagonal den as locus for our thoughts. Here was his library. Here he finished his account of the Zincali, and immediately began upon "The Bible in Spain." "At first," he says, "I proceeded slowly—sickness was in the land, and the face of nature was overcast—heavy rain-clouds swam in the heavens—the blast howled amid the pines which nearly surround my lonely dwelling, and the waters of the lake which lies before it, so quiet in general and tranquil, were fearfully agitated. . . . The winter passed and spring came with cold dry winds and occasional sunshine, whereupon I rose, shouted, and mounting my horse, even Sidi Habis-milk, I scoured all the surrounding district, and thought but little of 'The Bible in Spain.' So I rode about the country, over the heaths, and through the green lanes of my native land, occasionally

visiting friends at a distance, and sometimes, for variety's sake, I staid at home and amused myself by catching huge pike, which lie perdue in certain deep ponds skirted with lofty reeds, upon my land, and to which there is a communication from the lagoon by a deep and narrow watercourse. I had almost forgotten 'The Bible in Spain.' Then came the summer with much heat and sunshine, and then I would lie for hours in the sun and recall the sunny days I had spent in Andalusia, and my thoughts were continually reverting to Spain, and at last I remembered that 'The Bible in Spain' was still unfinished; whereupon I arose and said: 'This loitering profiteth nothing'—and I hastened to my summer-house by the side of the lake, and there I thought and wrote, and every day I repaired to the same place, and thought and wrote until I had finished 'The Bible in Spain.'"

In the same place and doubtless in much the same way was "Lavengro" written, the experiences which formed the book taking on a colour from the distance through which he looked back at them. For at Oulton he felt it keenly that he was getting old—felt it the more the older he got. He broke away for some years, but returned to Oulton, as he said, to die. At the last he was irritable and a recluse. One of his latest visitors happened to ask him how old he was, and Borrow at once became very angry. "Sir," he answered, "I tell my age to no man!" Then he retired to his summer-house and began his last composition, in a pathetic shaky hand, with the words: "Never talk to people about their age."

Not all of the associations with the summer-house are as melancholy as the last ones, when he was looking back over the rapid passage of his adventurous life and wishing for another chance to follow the gipsy trail. Last years are indeed too apt to be pathetic. It is true that as the tall and mysterious figure of the old man, clad in his flowing black Spanish cloak, still walked about the lanes and still sang or chanted verses as he walked, the children used to call him " gipsy," or " witch." They did not say, " This *is* a man ! " as a child did in Cornwall twenty-five years before. But nevertheless there were happy moments in the summer-house. Jasper Petulengro came to see him there, the gipsy whose acquaintance he had made many years before, and whose character runs through " Lavengro." We do not doubt they had a good crack together ; mostly, says Borrow, on the " affairs of Egypt," meaning the condition of the gipsies.

We do not usually think of Mrs. Borrow, and of her anxieties and troubles when her husband quarrelled vigorously with his respectable neighbours, and brought in vagrants to closet with himself for long conversations. It would seem as though hers was not the easiest of lives ; and yet she was responsible for bringing him to Oulton. She was a widow—Mary Clarke, who owned the estate. Borrow was not a family man, any more than FitzGerald. He had let his gipsy companion, Isopel Berners, go to America. Some streak of pride prevented his marrying Isopel, as otherwise he might ; but he suffered her to go, and wandered

himself back to Spain. That was in 1839, when he was still an athlete and carried to its best advantage his six foot three. Then was the widow "very kind, very kind," as writes one biographer. She followed him to Gibraltar; as a friend of Borrow's put it, "she found him out, having travelled over half Europe in search of him, and took possession of him." It is not for us to say if she chose wisely.

You will note that we are taking the Borrow associations backwards. Oulton Broad, on which the visitor may row or sail, came into his life when he was famous. For his youth—the queer, dreamy and yet reckless youth—we must go to Norwich; for his birth to "pretty, quiet Dereham." And these things we shall do in time, for Borrow as a personality seizes upon the imagination, as his books seize upon whatever we have of roving instinct.

BLUNDESTONE AND YARMOUTH

THERE is a spot near by that is connected with the beginning, not the end, of a delightful person's life. I refer to Blundestone, about two miles from Oulton—the "Blunderstone" of "David Copperfield." The rectory is usually identified as the house which David's father called the "Rookery." You recall the question, "In the name of Heaven," said Miss Betsy suddenly, "why Rookery?"

David's mother answered that Mr. Copperfield had seen "some weather-beaten ragged old rooks' nests" in the elms at the bottom of the garden; she continued:

"We thought—Mr. Copperfield thought—it was quite a large rookery; but the nests were very old ones, and the birds have deserted them a long while."

"David Copperfield all over!" cried Miss Betsy. "David Copperfield from head to foot! Calls a house a rookery when there's not a rook near it, and takes the birds on trust, because he sees the nests!"

Well, there are changes in the old home, even more than David later tells of. There are now some rooks near by—or at least some newer nests, from which I draw the same inference as David's father.

One of the entertaining factors in mingling reminiscences of books and places is the quaint

medley of so-called truth and so-called fiction left, as a coloured residue, within the memory. The more I think about it the less sure I am I ever saw the little village; at least not as a villager would see it, and certainly not as Gray saw it, through a veil of melancholy. It was peopled for me when I got there by familiar faces; I merely recombined some elements to fit; and the curious thing was that it made no difference knowing that Dickens never saw the place, and merely took the name, in passing, from a signpost. No; the medley that I watched, and the only one that I can clearly summon, had in one cottage doorway the old lady who bought the caul; had Miss Betsy descending upon the "Rookery," with a rustle of her skirts, to press her nose till it was white against the pane; had David and Peggotty in a variety of poses—in church, where David fell off the seat with a crash and was "taken out, more dead than alive, by Peggotty." What I saw were these things, with another scene at night by the parlour fire, where David read to Peggotty about crocodiles, and felt very sleepy over them; and what I heard were Peggotty's buttons, when "a little volley of those explosives went off," and David wondered "whether, if she were employed to lose me like the boy in the fairy tale, I should be able to track my way home again by the buttons she would shed."

Oh, marvellous Peggotty! I spoke once before about Mary, the Ipswich housemaid. Here Suffolk has to yield the palm to Norfolk. There never was a better creation than Peggotty—laughing or crying, scolding or kissing, darning or looking into

the fire, bursting buttons or sleeping with a peaceful nasal rumbling. "I could not have believed, unless I had heard her do it, that one defenceless woman could have snored so much." For all of David's boasting, with some importance, that Suffolk was his county, there was too much Dickens in him for that to be strictly true. But Peggotty, with the complexion of a red velvet foot-stool—"the stool was smooth, and Peggotty was rough, but that made no difference"—is true as steel to East Anglia. You may see her components in Blundestone lanes, or in the Rows of Yarmouth—Yarmouth which "was, upon the whole, the finest place in the universe." For Peggotty was "proud to call herself a Yarmouth Bloater."

There is still a Yarmouth carrier at Blundestone, though his name is not now Barkis. From the moment of hearing of him my thoughts naturally wandered with "the laziest horse in the world," with "many deviations up and down lanes," towards the town which plays such a part in David's life. "It looked," he continues, "rather spongy and soppy, I thought, as I carried my eye over the great dull waste that lay across the river; and I could not help wondering, if the world was really as round as my geography book said how any part of it came to be so flat. But I reflected that Yarmouth might be situated at one of the poles, which would account for it."

"As we drew a little nearer," David goes on, "and saw the whole adjacent prospect lying a straight low line under the sky, I hinted to Peggotty

that a mound or so might have improved it ; and also that if the land had been a little more separated from the sea, and the town and the tide had not been quite so much mixed up, like toast and water, it would have been nicer." This improvement Peggotty rejected " with greater emphasis than usual." Indeed, Dickens was really much taken with Yarmouth. In 1848 he made his first visit, and immediately determined to make it the scene of a story ; he wrote to John Forster : " Yarmouth, sir, . . . is the strangest place in the wide world."

The inn where David waited for the coach has been identified with the " Crown and Anchor," on Hall Quay. Here it was that he " procured a sheet of paper and an inkstand and wrote the note to Peggotty :

> My Dear Peggotty, I have come here safe. Barkis is willing. My love to mamma. Yours affectionately. P.S. He says he particularly wants you to know *Barkis is willing.*

I suppose it is best to break away from Dickens, for Yarmouth should be seen through more than one account. Defoe praised the city, Wesley blamed it for wickedness ; Wordsworth and Coleridge started together from the picturesque and fine old quay in September, 1798, for Germany. Southey's stay has been less noticed, though his hero Nelson's sayings when he landed here have never been forgotten. One at least, which I learn from Mr. Dutt, is likely to go on for ever. He landed on November 6, 1800, after he had fought and won the battle of the Nile. There

was a furore in the town, and rarely has there been such a scene of welcome. His horses were taken from their carriage, their place assumed by the enthusiastic people; with the pale, thin figure in the middle the crowd surged to the old Wrestlers' Hotel. There he was given the freedom of the borough. "Your *right* hand, my lord," said the town clerk, when Nelson laid his left upon the book to swear by. "That is at Tenerife," was the quiet reply. But those nearest heard it and passed it on, and again the streets roared and re-echoed with the cheering.

Now for just a word of the Old Town, bordering on the river. The characteristic of it is the formation of *Rows*, an interminable series of very narrow lanes; the narrowest, which has the attractive name of "Kitty Witches Row," leads from King Street to Middlegate Street, and is not quite two and a half feet across. It is conjectured that Sir John Fastolf, when he came into town from Caister Castle, avoided this particular passage. It is at least certain that he could never have passed through it. The Great Mill is a sight to be remembered, the Market Place is attractive, and the parish church, whose central tower bears traces of the work of Herbert de Lozinga, first Norman Bishop of Norwich, is so large that Yarmouth might almost be mistaken for a cathedral city.

The continental influence upon the port of Yarmouth has been often remarked; there is much of Amsterdam in this Norfolk town, and particularly in the harbour. All ports are to a certain extent international, and one feels that to

jabber some unheard-of language would not be taken, as inland, for a sign of imbecility. Certainly there is much jargon used upon the quayside that one finds it hard to understand, whether it be expressions like Mr. Peggotty's "gormed" or the one FitzGerald noticed, "horrywaur." He offered fifty pounds to the philologist who would guess the meaning and the derivation without looking to the end. FitzGerald is long gone, and it would be hard to collect the reward, and yet there are few who could justly claim it. The truth is—"Au revoir." Again, since I am on the subject, there used to be an expression "teaching Ape's Eyes to children." For some time I went about looking for people who were distorting the countenances of young Peggottys; until at last Mr. Redstone pointed out to me that it was only due to local pronunciation that "A B C D's" had become "ABI-CIDES" and that this latter had permuted to the simian implication.

Besides the language of the fishermen, which Dickens has caught with wonderful accuracy, there are many seaside bits of folklore which correspond to those indicated, ever so briefly, for "Sely Suffolk." I mentioned witchcraft there; in 1644, sixteen persons were hanged for witchcraft in Yarmouth, by Matthew Hopkins, "Witch-finder General"; and this is only one item in a long history. Of stories, there is along the coast and particularly north of Yarmouth the legend of "Black Shuck." He is a demon dog, big as a calf, who pads noiselessly along under hedgerow shadows, tracking the steps of lonely wayfarers;

sometimes he presages his comings with horrible, unearthly howls; neither mere nor wall can stop him when he has a victim in view—and yet when he meets them, as oft as not he does not kill outright. He is contented with a malevolent and wicked glare from yellow, evil eyes; the phosphorescent chops drip, but all he does is stare. Yet, when Black Shuck's glance is once seen, the seer never lives. To meet him means death within the year.

For this reason I do not give a list of the places he frequents. I have described him in Yarmouth, because it is still possible to hear him mentioned there; and because it is safe to read of him in the large town. In Neatishead Lane—well, let us pass on. I was talking about death; one more melancholy passage and I am through. That is the last scene of Mr. Barkis.

"He's a-going out with the tide," said Mr. Peggotty to me, behind his hand.

My eyes were dim, and so were Mr. Peggotty's; but I repeated in a whisper, "With the tide?"

"People can't die, along the coast," said Mr. Peggotty, "except when the tide's pretty nigh out. They can't be born, unless it's pretty nigh in—not properly born, till flood. He's a-going out with the tide . . .

And yet, despite the fact the tide turns twice a day, there are few healthier places than Yarmouth. Let us dismiss Black Shuck, and remember Dickens only where he says that if anyone had a grudge against any particular insurance company, the best way to gratify it would be to buy a heavy life annuity and then retire to Yarmouth.

Not that it was always so. Up to the year of the Black Death, Yarmouth seems to have kept to Dickens's standard. She prospered and throve so well that an indication of her power is amazing. At the siege of Calais, in 1346, she had more men in the fleet than any other port, London not excepted. Out of two hundred and seventeen ships she alone contributed forty-three. And though I speak under correction, it would seem as if the thriving little town had then somewhere around ten thousand inhabitants. Came the year 1349, and by a diocesan report " there was buried in the parish church and churchyard of the said towne in one year 7,052 men, by reason whereof the most part of the dwelling-places and the inhabitations of the said towne stode desolate, and fell into utter ruin and decay . . ." Whether the figures are strictly accurate—and the case for them seems good—the loss in any estimate was frightful. Following that was the blockage of the harbour by shifting sands, so that Yarmouth fell upon hard times indeed. It took a long period to catch up with Lowestoft in the fishing competition ; she has now, however, surpassed her ancient rival.

Nothing has been said about the Yarmouth fish-markets or the shipping here, for descriptively there would be much repetition of what I said for Lowestoft. But at Lowestoft I told a fish story about Sir John Fastolf, and have mentioned his name again. It is well to add that Caister Castle is just to the north of Yarmouth, and at Caister Castle lived the knight. It has been variously asserted that Shakespeare did and did not

calumniate his memory in the character that most of us know Fastolf by. The probability seems to be that he was used somewhat as Henley was used by Stevenson when the latter drew John Silver—all his finer qualities were stripped from him, and only the unique wit and masculinity of the man remained. Sir Conan Doyle's picture of Sir Oliver Buttesthorn is doubtless more accurate. But even in Falstaff we see the padded skeleton of the man ; as in Caister Castle we see the skeleton of his house.

Caister is of course a common name in this country of Roman *castra* ; there is another Caistor near Norwich, of which an old song tells :

> Caistor was city when Norwich was none
> And Norwich was built of Caistor stone.

It will be then in the right order to take the " City of Churches " now, even if I have to pass over the low-lying " Broadland " in between the coast and Norwich.

NORWICH

A FINE old city, truly, is that, view it from whatever side you will; but it shows best from the east, where the ground, bold and elevated, overlooks the fair and fertile valley in which it stands. Gazing from those heights, the eye beholds a scene which cannot fail to awaken, even in the least sensitive bosom, feelings of pleasure and admiration. At the foot of the heights flows a narrow and deep river, with an antique bridge communicating with a long and narrow suburb, flanked on either side by rich meadows of the brightest green, beyond which spreads the city, the fine old city, perhaps the most curious specimen at present extant of the genuine old English town. Yes, there it spreads from north to south, with its venerable houses, its numerous gardens, its thrice twelve churches, its mighty mound, which, if tradition speaks true, was raised by human hands to serve as the grave heap of an old heathen king, who sits deep within it, with his sword in his hand and his gold and silver treasures about him. There is a grey old castle upon the top of that mighty mound; and yonder, rising three hundred feet above the soil, from among those noble forest-trees, behold that old Norman master-work, that cloud-encircled cathedral spire, around which a garrulous army of rooks and choughs continually wheel their flight. Now, who can wonder that the children of that fine old city are proud of her, and offer up prayers for her prosperity? I, myself, who was not born within her walls, offer up prayers for her prosperity. . . .

When he wrote these words in the summer-house on Oulton Broad, Borrow was in memory

looking through the eyes of a youth who used to climb on Mousehold Heath and linger with the gipsies there. Particularly from this vantage point it is a fine old city. Fuller said the history of all England might be carved out of Norfolk. It may be that modern historians would disagree, and it is always the privilege of the modern to condemn old views. But what is true and indisputable, is to say the history of Norfolk might be carved out of Norwich.

First of those we know about with any certainty are the Iceni. I remarked at Lowestoft the attention they paid to drinking cups; as extenuating circumstances, these northern marshes and the fen land must have been very cold. Then came the Romans, who put up one of their strongest camps. At Burgh and at Caistor are remains of Roman outposts, where they "buylded toures on the clyues of the ocean in dyverse places" against the coming of the nothern pirates; thus was the estuary *Gariensis* guarded, which then ran up to Norwich. With these protections, the inland town began to thrive. Villas were built, and after generations the sons of early Roman colonists began to lead the life of country gentlemen, with central heating for the rooms to which they returned in comfort after hunting the wolf and the wild boar. On the south side of the villa the Roman-British daughters[1] planted violets; the

[1] Incidentally, the cat (as the daughter's counterpart to the son's hunting dogs) seems to have come into Britain with the Romans, lending her insolent and lazy comfort to the villas. Later, under the Saxon kings, cats increased

faithful slaves would cultivate the garden, while those less trusted were tending the far-spreading fields. Yes, Roman Norwich only needs a little imagination to be reconstructed. A pretty place it was, and flower-scented. But they had not everything their way. There was an east wind, and the Romans always feared the roving bands of pirates—not without good cause. Yet they were strong until increased taxation caused by inflated boundaries broke down the empire, and they had never quite so much to suffer at the hands of the marauders as had the weaker Saxons when Rome's legions were withdrawn.

As Borrow intimates, there used to be a court of Anglo-Saxon kings upon the central mound of the city, much older than the castle for which it is now conspicuous. There were deliberations on the coastal ravages, and on the depredations of the Danes. Constant fear of attack played a large part in fusing the Saxon demesnes together. And with the Norman era—we fly through centuries on rapid wings—Norwich became a centre even better organized for East Anglian government. Then was the castle built upon the older mound. Then, under Bishop de Lozinga, the see of of East Anglia was moved from Thetford to Norwich, as once before it had been moved from Dunwich to

in commercial value, and there was a heavy fine for killing another man's mouser. The fine was determined, I am credibly informed, by holding the dead cat by the tip of its tail, with its nose just touching the ground. Grain was then poured over it until the tip of the tail was covered. A nice point in cat-breeding was to attain the greatest tail-length possible.

Thetford. The cathedral was begun, monastic halls put up. Trade grew by leaps and bounds. Flemish artisans were brought over to help the textile industry, and they again in leisure moments started gardens, reminiscent (but they were probably forgetful) of the Roman. Famous families that we know made here their head-quarters; to read through some old chronicle like Dugdale's "Baronage" is to find a fine procession of old Norfolk names—the Bigods that we saw at Framlingham, the Erpinghams, the Fastolfs, Howards, Boleyns, Pastons. Sparkling through succeding centuries the different members of such houses flash to our remembrance, and we see a new nobility of intellect rising in such men as Sir Thomas Browne. The Huguenots added their skill in trade, and under the shadow of the castle were put up churches where they might praise God in French. And so towards the time when Borrow spoke, when the Opies, the Gurneys, the Martineaus were likewise families of talent, and the Norwich school of artists was rising under the hands of the Cromes, Ladbrooke and Cotman. One could continue to to-day and mention living families who uphold the best traditions of the city, but there will be enough to do in enlarging even sketchily one or two of the pictures outlined above.

At best, two crowded paragraphs like the preceding form a poor way to write of richly-storied Norwich. The city, though its weaving trade and its high rank in the realm was lost by the industrial revolution, has been inoculated and re-energized by other thriving trades. Still prosperous, it lies

before us. Let us leave Thorpe Station, stroll over the River Wensum—" narrow and deep," says Borrow—and up the curving hill formed by the Prince of Wales Road. There is a sign placed by the thoughtful city guardians, " To the Cathedral," which points off to the right ; there is also, a little farther on, Cathedral Street turning in the same direction. The wary traveller will avoid both of these. They are not (in my opinion) the best way to the Cathedral. There some good and bulging red-distempered cottages down the winding passage of Cathedral Street—some exceptional houses, in fact ; but it is an unhistoric way to the Cathedral.

Denying ourselves those methods, let us first continue up the hillside, winding to the left, past the Post Office and into the Cattle Market. This is the position for the best view of the Castle. Having gazed, one may cross the bridge and enter it. The old keep, all that is left of the original, is a tremendous, square, imposing structure. It has been necessary to reface it, and the interior is now used as a museum ; but in spite of all the incongruities within its vitals one can get a good picture of Norman life. Inside, a tiger shot by the present King pauses with uplifted foot and glassy stare at the sight of tantalizing but equally stuffed Oryxs and Waterbuck. These are distractions which the keep tries to digest ; but even so a picture may be formed of this same keep open to the sky, warriors sleeping against the walls, fire-warmed but nevertheless cursing with remarkable stolidity the " ruddy cold," or its equivalent in French.

NORWICH CATHEDRAL FROM THE SOUTH-EAST

From a Water-colour Drawing by Walter Dexter, R.B.A.

From the battlements is a fine view of the old city. Here lie the buildings in panorama, not, as Borrow saw them from Mousehold, in perspective. And from this point above it Norwich justifies its name, "City of Churches." The spires rise above the houses, and towers show against the green of trees; all with a background of brown and gold where Mousehold Heath rises behind the Cathedral; and eastward is the warm and sunlit valley of the Yare. Again, you will agree with Thomas Fuller in saying that Norwich is "either a city in an orchard or an orchard in a city, so equally are trees and houses blended in it." To nostrils which are delicate, in May comes wafting up the scent of apple-blossoms; and the thought suggests cider for lunch. Descending with this prospect in mind I was in better humour for the fine things of the museum. We can pity the poor tiger who will never get his meal; we may notice as among the best of other things there the wood-carvings of James Mins; and there are, of course, the birds.

After lunch I was ready for the best way to the Cathedral, which is by way of Tombland. This was the Anglo-Saxon market place, and later became the scene of less peaceable affairs than selling eggs and greens. For it is just within the gates of the cathedral close, and therefore adjacent to the quarters of the monks. These monks were not the ordinary, quiet, tonsured devotees of breviaries. I have already intimated that the constant invasion of the Danes bred warlike East Anglians—well, when the Danes were shut out at last, or assimilated, it would seem as if the most

hardy of the fighting breed went into this Norfolk monastery. They came to live within the close, and looked out upon Tombland.

The market place had been vacated after the Normans built a new one, but it was customary to hold a fair every year on the old site. Whether my ingenious theory of warlike monks is true or not, it seems they could not look out upon the fair with equanimity. It may have been that the rejoicing disturbed their calm orisons; it may simply have been envy—I incline somewhat to this last. At any rate, in the thirteenth century it was a custom of some standing for the lusty monks to sally forth in closed phalanx from one of the twin gates, and try to ravage the festivities. You will remember Rabelais's remark that a monk inside a cloister is not worth two eggs, but outside he is well worth thirty. That seems to have held true for Norwich. Having the advantage of their opponents in their close formation they often succeeded in killing a good many of the citizens. On the Sunday before St. Lawrence's Day, 1272, they had a notable excursion. The black phalanx started early, worked up to the pitch, no doubt, by some hours' fasting. Gathering speed as they progressed, they killed as long as killing seemed amusing, plundered till they could carry no more, and then ended the evening in a tavern. A marvellous scene it must have been—would we had had some Norwich Rabelais to describe it. The most likely time for counter-attack was while the phalanx, serried now, was becoming maudlin as the host ran off his legs for sack. So, we may

judge, there gathered round the door the bravest of the citizens, albeit they were more loath than the monks to fight on Sunday. That was always the advantage which the monks exploited. They could not only kill, but utterly condemn. It was doubly unfair, to have advantage both in arms and in exorcism. And this some merry rascal with a tonsure saw, and probably dispelled all comers with a made-up Papal Bull.

Whether the above is accurate, I leave to the discretion of the reader. The outlines are true. Each may fill in for himself. In the sequel the citizens were somewhat revenged, for they gathered in a mass to make protest. Surprised at their own strength, they found themselves moving to the close. They stormed the walls, burnt and burst the gates, destroyed and plundered much within —clearing that same ground on which the cloisters were later built. In killing they reversed the process, and many monks were slain. The prior, girding up his gown, escaped to Yarmouth. Finally, both King and Pope had to adjudicate, which they did by punishing every one all round. The heaviest blow fell on the citizens. At their expense was erected the Ethelbert gate to the close, replacing one that had been burnt. It is a fine example of squared flintwork, with a peaceful look about its geometrical patterning.

A little farther to the north is the Erpingham gate, erected some fifty years later by Sir Thomas Erpingham. The good old knight lies now within the cathedral, on the north side and near the altar. But to describe either the close or the

cathedral is beyond my power. I could state the usual facts; that the latter was begun in 1096, and completed in the fifteenth century; that it suffered heavily from Puritan enthusiasm, and was repaired after the Restoration; that there is a curious hole in the central roof for letting down a thurible; that the choir terminates in a semi-circular apse, "with ambulatory and radiating chapels," which are a French arrangement and very uncommon in England; that the organ is particularly fine, and likewise the cloisters. But these remarks will only serve to irritate the architects; I have told a story about the cathedral, which is all that I can do. The specific catalogue of details must be looked into on the spot. Suffice it to say that in no city that I remember does a spire rise more gracefully, more delicately outlined against the blue, than does this one of Norwich.

One word more, lest the associations should be thought too far in the dim and dusty past. On the quiet, misty dawn of October 12, 1915, a firing squad marched into the courtyard of the prison of St. Gilles in Brussels. Before them came the spare, unmoved figure of a Norwich nurse. The dawn was broken by the volley. Much later came her body back to join her spirit in her native land; and you will see, close to the south-east wall of the cathedral, where the sun plays warm upon it, the grave of Edith Cavell.

The Norwich Grammar School is easily accessible. It is in the close, hard by the Erpingham gate. Here is the statue of Nelson, a "sometime scholar" there. Other striking alumni of the school are

Brooke, the Rajah of Sarawak, and a remarkable man; likewise Coke, the successful Lord Chief Justice, and Borrow, the unsuccessful schemer (at Oulton) for the title of J.P.

So have we again come to Borrow. Indeed when we come to intimacy with him it is difficult to keep away. George Borrow first came to Norwich when he was eleven, and he was put into the Grammar School almost immediately. It appears that he was indolent and even stupid there; those of us who have been accused of the same vices regard him with the more enthusiasm. On one occasion, however, he broke into activity. There was the usual discontent of some of his accomplices with the artificialities of school. They decided to break from the bonds, escape, and become smugglers in the sand dunes of the east coast. Off they started gallantly, by the Yarmouth road, laden with potatoes and horse pistols. The first were probably the better weapons.

They got to Acle, about eleven miles from Norwich, where they planned to have refreshments. Unfortunately they were recognized by a gentleman who was driving by, convicted of truancy, and conveyed home. There George, as ringleader, was hoisted on the back of his schoolmate James Martineau—afterwards Dr. Martineau—and flogged severely; for which circumstance Borrow, who was as proud as Lucifer, avoided Dr. Martineau all his life.

How that amazing character, alternately dreaming and fighting as a boy, slowly maturing from a youth who used to

> Drink at a draught a pint of rum,
> And then be neither sick nor dumb

—how he was sent to Spain as a special emissary of the Bible Society, is surely a question of some interest. The opportunity dated from one morning that he went fishing in the Yare at Earlham, and met Mr. Gurney. That philanthropist, whether he is remembered through Quaker channels or by the medium of Gilbert and Sullivan, chose a very active if not altogether Friend-like agent. But for the interview I can only refer to "Lavengro," and for the result to "The Bible in Spain."

So far as I remember, I have not yet extricated the reader from the cathedral close. The wait, if he will pardon us, could be put in profitably there. But now returning through the Erpingham gate we must give at least one glance at Tombland. Edith Cavell will be seen again; though we do not feel that either here or in London the monuments are adequate in beauty. In Tombland is the old and well-known Maid's Head Hotel. Across the square from the gates is the Hercules and Samson House. It used to be the town house of Sir John Fastolf, and the wooden figures followed the old custom of putting posts before the doors of chief magistrates—in some degree, perhaps, a relic of the ancient asylum privilege.

Passing by St. George's Church, we enter Prince's Street. This is the most interesting way of leaving Tombland, for here we come to St. Andrew's Hall. Description of the splendid Perpendicular interior is no good unless it is entered; and there,

as in the near-by Strangers' Hall, facilities are such as make description unnecessary. Pass we on afterwards by the short St. Andrew's Hill to London Street and the Market Place. Here it is well to pause.

On the eastern side of the Market Place, in a house long since pulled down, lived the author of the "Religio Medici"—that quaint and wise old Doctor who had "admirable skill in physick," and even more in writing down his thoughts—Sir Thomas Browne. In 1671, Charles II visited Norwich and conferred knighthood upon the doctor, in the St. Andrew's Hall we have just left. A month or two after that John Evelyn was persuaded by Henry Howard to visit Norwich. Evelyn was the more anxious to come in that he wished to meet Sir Thomas; but before I narrate his interview it might be well to quote from Macaulay a description of the Howards' house.

"Norwich," says the historian, "had also a court in miniature. In the heart of the city stood an old palace of the Dukes of Norfolk, said to be the largest town house in the Kingdom out of London. In this mansion, to which were annexed a tennis court, a bowling green, and a wilderness, stretching along the banks of the Wansum, the noble family of Howard frequently resided, and kept a state resembling that of petty sovereigns. Drink was served to guests in goblets of pure gold. The very tongs and shovels were of silver. Pictures by Italian masters adorned the walls. The cabinets were filled with a fine collection of gems. . . . Here, in the year 1671, Charles and his

court were sumptuously entertained. Here, too, all comers were annually welcomed, from Christmas to Twelfth Night. Ale flowed in oceans for the populace. Three coaches, one of which had been bought at a cost of five hundred pounds[1] to contain fourteen persons, were sent every afternoon round the city to bring ladies to the festivities; and the dances were always followed by a luxurious banquet. . . ."

Such, then, was the house which Evelyn visited. Now we may follow his diary.

"Next morning" he writes, "I went to see Sir Tho. Browne. . . . His whole house and garden being a paradise and cabinet of rarities, and that of the best collections, especially medails, books, plants, and natural things. Amongst other curiosities, Sir Thomas had a collection of the eggs of all the foule and birds he could procure, that country (especially the promontory of Norfolck) being frequented, as he said, by several kinds, which seldom or never go farther into the land, as cranes, storkes, eagles, and a variety of water-foule. He led me to see all the remarkable places of this ancient citty, being one of the largest, and certainly, after London, one of the noblest of England, for its venerable cathedrall, number of stately churches, cleannesse of the streetes, and buildings of flints, so exquisitely headed and squared, as I was much astonished at; but he told me they had lost the art of squaring the flints, in which they once so much excell'd, and of which the churches,

[1] Then worth, perhaps, four times as much as at the present time.

best houses, and walls, are built. The castle is an antique extent of ground, which they now call Marsfield, and would have been a fitting area to have placed the ducal palace on. The suburbs are large, the prospects sweete, with other amenities, not omitting the flower gardens, in which all the inhabitants excel. The fabric of stuffs brings a vast trade to this populous towne."

So may we who stand and look at the remarkable chequered design of the face of the Guildhall, at the corner of the Market Place, recall the two friends staring at it, and Sir Thomas dilating upon the "ancient citty." Indeed the façade is exquisitely done, and is as fine as the work upon the Ethelbert Gate. Within the building is a memorial to Sir Thomas; the city is not forgetful, for there is also a statue to him in the Haymarket. In the Guildhall are other curios—Nelson's sword, for instance. This was captured from the Spainards at Cape St. Vincent and presented by him to the capital of his county. It is the one thing here which Borrow chiefly eulogizes.

It is not easy to find many pictures of the wise old doctor that bring us as close to him as that of Evelyn. From his day to ours he has been loved by many of literary taste, and by many medical men; and there are some who, as did Sir William Osler, combine the two and love him doubly. Therefore we like to see him intimately, in his garden of a summer or in winter by the fireside writing letters to his "dear sonne" in France. They are charming letters, full of restrained,

paternal love; and occasionally we get such gossip as:

> Excesse in aparell and chargeable dresses are got into the country, especially among woeman; men go decently and playn enough.

He is referring, possibly, to the extravagance set by the Howards. The phrase "chargeable dresses" is one to make men sigh in passing Bond Street, and agree with Sir Thomas in his spelling of "woeman." But Dame Dorothy, his lady, was not one to censure in this matter. Her position comes in a postcript one time to her:

> Deare Daughter,—. . . Wee dayly wish for the new cloths; all our linen being worne out but shefts, and Tomey would give all his stock to see his briches.

This "Tomey" was the Doctor's grandson. He was a "very good boy for his boak," and delighted to read to his grandparents when he came "from schole." But for the whole delightful correspondence, or rather for the best selection of it, I may refer to Mr. Lucas, in "The Gentlest Art."

They were a loving pair, Sir Thomas and Dame Dorothy; and on his death upon his seventy-seventh birthday, she put up a memorial to him in St. Peter Mancroft's Church. There was a sinister sequel to his interment with which we have no concern here; the bones (so we are told) are all regathered once more in that beautiful church with the fine tower and, as they put it in the eighteenth century, "a good ring of eight bells."

Now I may return to Borrow, and make him the excuse for a stroll. Along St. Giles's Street

west of the Guildhall and past the Hippodrome, Willow Lane leads off to the right. Borrow's house and the court which bears his name are down this passage. Here he lived first as a schoolboy, then later with his mother, while he was still poor enough to have to develop his powers of walking. When, in 1833, he had to go to London for an interview with the Bible Society he walked up. The 112 miles took him twenty-seven and a half hours, which is not unworthy of comparison with the time by coach. His total expenditure by the way was fivepence-halfpenny, on a roll of bread, two apples, a pint of ale, and a glass of milk.

So was I careful to specify a "stroll," and not a "walk" with Borrow. We may read how when still articled with the lawyers in Tuck's Court, St. Giles, but in reality studying all manner of languages and no law at all, he met once more the gipsy Jasper Petulengro at the cattle fair on Castle Hill. From the hill they dipped down together into the low-lying streets around the cathedral, crossed Bishop's Bridge, and climbed to Mousehold Heath.

If we pause at Bishop's Bridge, a fine remnant of thirteenth-century work, we get again a good glimpse of the cathedral. It is, perhaps, at its best from this side; and now that we have gone through Tombland the sign not far from Thorpe Station may be vindicated. The beautiful simplicity, the fine symmetry and balance, and above all the slender graceful spire uprising flame-

like and buoyant above the city—all are here emphasized. Here one sees it over the roofs of houses, as it should be seen.

Turning again, we are ready for the Heath. It is not quite what it was when they were there —not quite the "wild tract of furze and heather" of Old Crome's most famous painting. I have said too little of the Norwich school of artists, who took such interesting colour from the water-soaked region of the Broads—a country full of light reflected upwards as by the footlights of a stage. But of this one picture, in the National Gallery, I may say just one word. It is particularly interesting as being contemporary with Borrow's description—though here it must be noted that Borrow's heath is different in essence. We have seen Swinburne looking at Dunwich with spiritual rapture; Dickens looking at Yarmouth with emphatic realism; Borrow looking at Norwich with the descriptive eye of memory. But Borrow's eye is very different to the others, and Borrow's country is not at all as real in its detail as his cities. It is impossible to identify his countryside with specific localities where he does not definitely set out to memorize; for it all becomes to him a land of his imagination. So is his heath not real, in the sense that it is peculiarly true for Mousehold that:

> There's night and day, brother, both sweet things; sun, moon, and stars, brother, all sweet things; there's likewise a wind on the heath. Life is very sweet, brother; who would wish to die?

MOUSEHOLD HEATH, NEAR NORWICH

From the Painting by Old Crome in the National Gallery

The painting of Old Crome is distinctly different. "The little stout man whose face is very dark, and whose eye is vivacious; . . . the little dark man with the brown coat and the top-boots" was great by no such creative imagination. With him we see the real heath, or rather selection made with exquisite decision. In the happiest and simple combination of a few living elements—a hillside against a colourful sky, with a few scattered bushes in the foreground—we see a brooding and a full expression of solitude and charm of dying day. It is like a passage from Hardy, but there is even more of colour. It is very much more real than Borrow, as perhaps a painting must be. Yet there is this of similarity, that he too went to Mousehold, as he said, for "air and space"; however much they differ, there is likewise for him "a wind on the heath."

I have done for Norwich not all that could be done, but yet an outline of a few spots of interest. Many points of even great attractiveness have been omitted. That, alas! must always be the way of travelling; for transient "flutterbies," as childhood's phrase used to have it, can never hope for the knowledge of an old inhabitant. I have not spoken of the Maid's Head Hotel, though it is one of the most interesting places in Norwich; nor of Kett's rebellion on Mousehold Heath, though that I hope to mention later; and, finally, for a city of churches I have behaved most shamefully in not devoting more attention to them. Frankly, however, the one which I like most of all seems to

have disappeared. That was a chapel of St. Nicholas, on Brakydowns, not far from the old walls. It was kept up by poor fishermen, and for this reason :

On a Day as a Shyppe wyth Marreners were in perye-shynge on the See, they prayed and required devoutly *Nycolas* Servaunt of God, sayeing yf Those Thynges that we have heard of the sayd, ben True, preve theym now. And anone a Man apered in lyknes, and sayd, Loo see ye me not: ye called me. And thenne he began to helpe theym in their exployte of the See. And Anone the Tempest ceased.

If this chapel is not gone, at least I could not find it ; and I am inconsolable.

WYMONDHAM

I THOUGHT of one more anecdote as I was leaving Norwich; it comes from Mr. Ritchie's charming book on "East Anglia." "Many, many years ago," he writes, "when wandering in the north of Germany, I came to an hotel in the Fremden Buch of which . . . an enthusiastic English man had written—and possibly the writing had been suggested by the hard fare and dirty ways of the place:

'England, with all thy faults, I love thee still.'

Underneath, a still more enthusiastic Englishman had written:

'Faults? What Faults? I know of none, except that Brigg's Lane, Norwich, wants widening.'"

I need only add to that the comment that Brigg's Lane, leading from the Market Place, has since that time been widened, and rejoices now in the name Brigg's Street. Secure in the consciousness that this was as it should be, I moved on.

The real objective was Dereham, for I was interested in tracing the Borrow associations to his birthplace; but, as I expected, it was morally impossible to make the journey (some twenty miles) without a break. If I went by road I could

not pass by Earlham without stopping to see the home of the Gurney family, recently pictured in a delightful fashion by Mr. Percy Lubbock. The philanthropist himself, John Gurney, appears in Borrow's "Lavengro"; but an even more attractive study is the daughter who became Elizabeth Fry. She was brought up at Earlham Hall, and, as Charles Lamb wrote about another pretty Quakeress,

> Her parents held the Quaker rule,
> Which doth the human feeling cool,
> But she was train'd in Nature's school,
> Nature had blest her.

Quaker homes are not necessarily too strict; as a girl she was allowed to gallop her pony through the Norfolk lanes, in scarlet riding habit, her glorious long golden hair streaming behind. There was, as part of her discipline, a basket on the pommel with comforts in it for the sick she visited. Early she learnt the seamy side of life, but without contamination of her own fine spirit, or a too sudden realization of the seriousness of duty. She was naturally girlish, and loved to be "dissipated" in hearing the band at Norwich. On a trip to London she went to the opera. "I was painted a little, had my hair dressed, and did look pretty for me. I own, I do love grand company. I did nothing but admire the Prince of Wales . . ."

No one who remembers Mrs. Fry will grudge her these innocent enjoyments. They played their part in her character without obliterating more serious thoughts. About the same time

that she was "painted a little" she had some inner struggles, resulting in resolutions of the type:

> I must not mump when my sisters are liked and I am not. . . .

Then she began to join in the proselytizing of the Earlham Friends—some of the conversions made among the farmers are redolent of human nature. "A young woman told us," wrote a friend of Elizabeth's, "that her father was nearly converted, and that a little more teaching would complete the business. He quite believes that he is lost; which is, of course, a great consolation to the old man."

Earlham, then, is one distraction by the road. I longed to go that way; and yet, since I was under some necessity of reaching Dereham, I was likewise half afraid. But the point is, I did not fare much better by train. Here my way was intercepted by a curious church tower, or rather pair of towers, and I got out at Wymondham station to investigate. The delay had its compensations, and I think they may be entered here.

Wymondham, or "Windham" to those who would appear familiar with the countryside, is a town with its back to the station. The first view is not lovely. Upon the western fringe there is a large, upstanding, U-shaped structure of gaunt stone—the church; upon the eastern ridge a windmill in white silhouette against the light blue sky,

with sunlight flashing from its four great sails. Between the church and the mill lies the town, an irregular huddle of red houses rising from green fields. There is no spectacular scenery to make the view interesting; and yet there was indication enough to persevere, and in the heart of this plain-looking picture I found some elements of prettiness and picturesqueness which formed complete reward.

The first noticeable object is at the top of a slight rise in the road, as it winds round some houses into the main street of Wymondham. To the inhabitants it is a market cross; to the visitor it is one of those eccentricities which subdivide these little towns in memory, and which, once seen, remain always unique. In reality, instead of a cross at all, there is a large timber-and-plaster octagonal box perched upon wooden legs, reminiscent of a haystack on stilts to avoid the damp, as the fashion is in Nova Scotia. This quaint building dates from 1616. It has been restored, but only so as to keep warm and living the appearance it had then—the woodwork and design are undisturbed. It has been variously used; for market judgments, for a public library, for meetings of the Wymondham Sewing Circle; and over all, with equal joyousness, the golden weathercock has veered flamboyantly and glinted back his message to the sun. I write enthusiastically because the cross was a real pleasure, and I found it the beginning of a street of many colours and of interesting houses. Some were timbered, some distempered, and the latter vary as the street curves from lemon and

buff and orange through salmon and cherry down to chocolate—a multitude of flavours. You cannot help but wonder if the residents show a corresponding change in character; but before the point is settled you come upon the church.

This, which had been the chief reason for my not flying past Wymondham in the train, proved to be remarkable. It is twice worthy of inspection, for it has a tower at either end of the nave. As an architectural curiosity the explanation is worth while. The towers are of unequal age; and the elder is about all that is left of a Benedictine priory (SS. Mary and Alban) founded on the site of a Saxon church in 1107. The priory was a massive pile, and the people, who were pressed into service in its construction, later claimed a share in its privilege of worship. Whereupon the chapel of the priory was divided, not without protest of the monks, by them and the townsfolk. The latter used the nave as their church, and in the fifteenth century put up the western tower that they might have their own peal of bells. Later still came the dissolution of the monasteries. All of the priory was swept away, save only that part which had been given to the people. The east tower, as a bolster to the church, was thus saved by proxy; and so the two stand to-day, one a symbol to the past, empty, hollow, with blackbirds wheeling round its octagonal shaft; the other a symbol to the present and harmonizing with the well-kept and beautiful interior.

Such, in brief abstract, are the external accoutrements of the town. The central, winding street has more of placid beauty than would have been

thought possible from the train. Yet, as I have remarked of Suffolk towns, the quietness is apt to be deceptive. There is something in the continuity of blood, and as we return and pause by the market-cross, entering the " King's Head " for a glass of Norfolk cider, we may think a little of the story of this peaceful town. When dates are quoted they have a habit of appearing dusty, not as though they symbolized real problems which are similar in many startling ways to those in front of us to-day. There is a trick of cancellation by which old coins are not allowed to pass for currency in 1922 ; but what is continually in mind in Norfolk is that continuity of rural life, in breeding, blood, and spirit, showing that the old coins are of as true a metal as the new. It is a theme worthy of a long narrative, and one which underlies the most of my account.

For one example, let us resurrect the dusty date of 1549. In that year occurred what was once called " The Commoyson in Norfolk " ; the chroniclers in Latin used to speak " De Furoribus Norfolciensum," which has a satisfying roll upon the tongue. Otherwise the event is known as " Kett's Rebellion," and it is brought in here because Kett was a Wymondham man, a successful tanner by profession. At the bottom of the disturbance was the break-up of the yeoman system of small farming, by the enclosures of common land—a transition of difficult adjustment. Perhaps the change was ultimately for the general good ; what was evident in 1549 was the inevitable hardship to the peasants as the enclosures took their lands. They refused to be evicted from the small holdings and starved without

protest ; as the enclosures occurred there were many murmurings about the "moche penery and scarsenes," until at last action was meditated. Country songs sprang up, inciting revolt :

> And with clubbes and clouted shone
> Shall the dede be done.

They called for "one bold felowe to stande forth," and the call of the peasants was answered by Robert Kett. His brother William, the Wymondham butcher, likewise helped in the organization. Having "conceived a wonderful hate," the "pore comons" met on June 20th and tore down the fences set up at Attleborough about the ground where previously they had rights of commonage. Then was quiet for a space, to see the effect of their demonstration.

Robert Kett was a man who himself owned some enclosures ; but feeling so strongly on the matter he gave up his own holdings and offered to lead the revolt more actively. Under his guidance demonstrations were resumed. Many more enclosures were wiped out, and, gathering strength, the peasants marched in a great body through Norwich to Mousehold Heath. Here they encamped, twenty thousand strong. In order, as a chronicler records, "to have a fayre shew and similitude of well doinge, they first procurd a Priyst to mynister thyer morninge and evening prayer in the Inglish tonge, then newly begon to be frequentyd." On the whole they seem to have been well handled by Kett, though of course there were depredations and some thievery. So large a number

encamped through a long summer were naturally restive. But under the Oak of Reformation—a somewhat scrawny tree now vanished from the Heath—Kett and the council judged the culprits; from this same spot, earlier in the summer, he had sent a petition to the King, outlining the peasants' grievances.

The story from now on is tragedy. The strike of the peasants, if wrong-headed, was not uncreditable; the grievances were admirably drawn up and submitted. They were merely pigeonholed; and though a reasoned reply might have been sent, all that transpired from the throne was a proclamation to disband. A small body of troops sent to enforce the edict was repulsed. King and council then resolved on final action. A considerable expedition, with foreign mercenaries, was put into the charge of the Earl of Warwick. Whatever the latter's faults, he was a brave man, carrying out instructions in a ruthless age. He swore his knights to courage on their swords. No less determined were Kett and his followers; a bloody battle was required to settle the dispute. Some two thousand insurgents were killed for lack of constructive statesmanship; and three hundred more were executed as a sequel. Robert Kett was hanged at Norwich Castle, and William likewise from the top of "Windham Steeple," as Stow calls the tower of the church. I should like to think it was the older, ruined one; for the story is not pretty to look back upon.

And yet it goes to show there has been spirited blood in Norfolk, and it is only one of many tales

which have always shown the Eastern Counties to be the home of ready expression for revolt. The spirit shows itself in many ways ; it has often been perverse, and often right ; it has had short memory, and fought on both sides of many questions ; it has turned to religious, social, political matters with equal temerity ; it has been hammered and battered and perhaps by now blunted and fused, though racially I think the blood continues to run high. I do not think that one would guess the continuity at all, except by a perception which goes beneath the surface ; but I should bank on its existence. It is a curious spirit, hidden as it is in humdrum things ; and yet, however hidden, I should not think this was the easiest of parts to govern—I mean to sway in habit, not merely in name. One trivial and tiny incident may or may not point to this. I remember, at a time when in many parts of England D.O.R.A. raised noisy protest, entering a certain unnamed " pub " in Norfolk during hours of prohibition, and finding a very placid, comfortable group enjoying what they held to be their rights in spite of any law. I doubt if they had made any protest at all ; but they certainly made no bones about breaking regulations. Here is the point to emphasize—there was not a sign of real abuse, not a bit of reckless contempt ; it was a cold winter's day, and they were merely warming themselves in comfort with a pint. I must say I thought them very sensible.

But I must hasten to return to Wymondham. Let me recall an old tale that is tied up with the

church. The priory has been mentioned, and its broken orts mingle with the bones of the churchyard. The son of the founder of the priory was the first Earl of Arundel, called, from a "glorious Exploit," William of the Strong Hand. Dugdale, in his "Baronage of England" (1675) tells the story:

It hapned that the Queen of France, being then a Widow, and a very beautiful woman, became much in love with a Knight of that Countrey, who was a comely person and in the flower of his youth: And because she thought that no man excelled him in valor, she caused a Tournament to be proclaimed throughout her Dominions: promising to reward those who should exercise themselves therein, according to their respective demerits; and concluding that if the person whom she so well affected, should act his part better than others in those Military Exercises, she might marry him without any dishonor to her self.

Hereupon divers gallant men, from forrain parts hasting to Paris; amongst others, came this our *William de Albini* bravely accoutred; and in the Tournament excelled all others; overcoming many, and wounding one mortally with his Lance: Which being observed by the Q. shee became exceedingly enamoured of him; and forthwith invited him to a costly Banquet, and afterwards bestowing certain Jewels upon him, offered him Marriage. But having plighted his troth to the Queen of England, then a Widow, refused her. Whereat she grew so much discontented, that she consulted with her Maids, how she might take away his life; and in pursuance of that designe, inticed him into a Garden, where there was a secret Cave, and in it a fierce Lion, unto which she descended by divers steps, under colour of shewing him the Best. And when she told him of his feirceness; he answered, that it was a womanish and not manly quality to be affraid thereof. But having him there, by the advantage of a folding dore, thrust him into the Lion. Being therefore in this danger,

WYMONDHAM CHURCH

he rolled his Mantle about his Arm ; and putting his hand into the mouth of the Beast, pulled out his Tongue by the root ; which done he followed the Queen to her Palace, and gave it to one of her Maids to present to her.

Returning thereupon into England, with the fame of this glorious Exploit ; he was forthwith advanced to the Earledom of Arundel, and for his Arms the *Lion* given him. Nor was it long after that, the Queen of England, accepted him for her husband, whose name was *Adeliza*, Widow to King *Henry* the first. . . .

To which the critic might append two remarks —first, that it is convenient to be engaged to an English Queen before dining with a volatile French one ; and secondly, as Mark Twain might have put it, the " feirceness " of the lion seems to have been exaggerated. Nevertheless, Dugdale tells the story well, and the touch about rewarding the knights according to their " respective demerits " is marvellously excellent. " This our William " was a stout-hearted fighter ; and after he came back to Wymondham priory for his long rest his family (to judge from Dugdale) carried on his spirit and produced the hero of Sir Conan Doyle's historical romances, the game little Sir Nigel.

Apart from these recollections at Wymondham proper, one or two excursions should be mentioned in the neighbourhood. The walk to Stanfield Hall is much more pleasant than the melancholy memories of Kett or Sir Walter Scott's " Kenilworth " would indicate. I must hasten to explain this last allusion before someone points out that Stanfield Hall never occurs in Scott.

And that is true. Nevertheless, Kett's first animosity to the enclosures came through contact

with a man called Flowerdew, who was steward to Sir John Robsart. Sir Walter Scott, by accident or design, has varied the historical facts somewhat in "Kenilworth." The father of Amy Robsart was not a knight of Devon, but in reality the owner of Stanfield Hall, by Wymondham. There he was living in 1549 with his daughter Amy. We have seen how John Dudley, Earl of Warwick, came through Norfolk to quell Kett's Rebellion; the Robsarts, as may be judged, were on the earl's side, and persuaded him and his staff to lie for the night at Stanfield Hall. With the earl was his son, Robert Dudley; Robert and Amy were both seventeen. To those who know the story it is useless to repeat how brave and handsome was the lad, how fair the girl. It was summer, and the magic of excitement lay upon the countryside. The gods who have these things in store looked down themselves with envy, and with pity, as the quiet evening settled in soft folds upon the house and its wide grounds. The moat echoing on its blue surface the reflection of the stars, bore likewise the reflection of two figures looking down at it from the old bridge. "While she was in this attitude," we may adapt from Scott, "and with a corresponding expression betwixt listlessness and expectation on her bright and intelligent features, you might have searched sea and land without finding anything half so expressive or so lovely. . . ."

They were married short of a year later; King and court were present at the ceremony. Then came the change of throne, and Elizabeth's selection

of Dudley as her favourite. When the Queen moves, pawns are lost—Amy was put away from her husband, and away from her Norfolk home. "Neglected and despised" perhaps she was, and we do not like to think about her days at Cumnor, even though realizing that Scott's verdict upon Dudley is too harsh. Only one gleam of hope encouraged Amy as a separated wife, and that is reflected in a letter to her tailor, William Edney:

edney wt my harty comendations thesse shallbe to desier you to take ye paynes for me As to make this gowne of vellet whiche I sende you wt suche a collare as you made my rosset taffyta gowne you sente me last and I will see you dyscharged for all I pray you let it be done wt as muche speade as you can . . .

It is just like a beautiful woman to send this record of vellet and taffyta, and "A Collare," through the years. It leads at least to memory of her as she would have liked to appear.

THE OLD MIGRATION

IT is very pleasant to be an amateur historian. The professional must always be beset by strong suspicions that what he says is wrong —or, at the best, insufficient. He has always to guard against half-truths ; in the main, therefore, must be a silent man. But the amateur, like the schoolboy or the poet, is allowed the knack of seizing on a single idea, and may have sublime faith in the holding power of his one thin strand. Caution and the curb are off. His tongue runs at its will. The result, of course, is often clotted nonsense ; but it is ease to the speaker, and sometimes, occasionally, a vivid, clear, and pleasant picture. Perhaps it is not all the story ; it is simplified too much, exaggerated here, belittled here, warped a bit somewhere else. What matter, where the argument can do but little harm ?

This privilege is narrowed in any question where lurks temper, and there is call for much discrimination wherever the field of the amateur's imagination lies close to that of action. If he is wise he may defer such things to a suspended judgment. What makes me hesitate and utter these remarks is thinking of the generalities that have been applied, the sweeping statements vigorously noised on most questions of history with

regard to England and America. I am not too young to remember being taught that the red-coats in Boston were a villainous and vile assortment of scoundrels, captained by a set of Falstaffs who lacked humour ; and I am not too old to find still in England some who persist in looking at America as a lusty, froward boy who made an ungracious mistake in breaking from the paternal fold. The truth ? I am not delving for it here—not for all of it. I am merely taking my own sweet will among some pictures of the past. The question happens to be one which has some sentimental influence on international relations, and it is fair to state *en passant* that the truth has never yet been caught up in a catchword, nor is it likely to be postulated in a single simple phrase.

What has already been the theme for several sketches is the background of our story now—the unadventurous appearance of these Eastern Counties. The outlook varies from the rime of winter days, when a stubble field may look like a powdered cheek with a stiff beard upon it, to the yellow-green of spring, or the golden-brown of summer, which forms a quilted coverlet with gentle folds. But however much it varies, and whether there is wind and rain or sun, quietness hangs over the country like a dream. It was not very different three centuries ago, when the dreaminess sent out ardent spirits, awake and doing, to what Dugdale would have termed " forrain emprise." In Wymondham I have spoken of " our William " and of Kett as two types of enterprise. We come now three miles to the north-west, where lies

Kimberley upon the railway line ; and that is the nearest station to Hingham. As one perceives, these names are pegs on which to hang remarks about Colonial adventure in South Africa and Massachusetts. I skip the first, because the double naming here is merely a diplomatic fortuity consequent upon the Earl of Kimberley's position at the time of the diamond rush.

There is another distinction. Precious stones made the new Kimberley famous. There are no such stones in Hingham, Massachusetts ; or rather one should say there are no diamonds. For some years ago a stone was sent over from the Old to the New, and stands now in a memorial tower in the American town. The inscription explains the value :

The Hingham Stone
long used as a mounting block
is believed to have stood
for centuries on the Village Green
and to have been known
to the Forefathers before the migration.
It was given by Hingham, Norfolk
to Hingham, Massachusetts
for this memorial
and was presented to the Town
on October 9, 1911, by the
Right Hon. James Bryce, D.C.L.
Ambassador for Great Britain
to the United States.

As it stands, far away from the village green on which the little dark-skirted, white-aproned girls play tag, it bears a pleasant memory of one who laid it and many broader memorials of international understanding in his long and useful day.

As to the old migration, I like to start by thinking of the country they were going to as they had to think of it, by the report of the Elizabethan adventurers. Call it what you will, " that marvellous summer time of the imagination, the Elizabethan age," did not die all at once. A great part of the spirit so remarkably called up, only suffered a sea-change. The fantastic dreams, the suddenly awakened boasts, the quest for far Cathay, melt imperceptibly and as you watch them into the New England of the Pilgrim Fathers; granting the addition of religious faith. One can hardly overestimate any one of the three factors in the migration—the stern, Old-Testament religion of a " Chosen " people, the business opportunities, and the less definite compulsion of adventure.

The revolt of the Nonconformists, in keeping with the spirit of East Anglia, was earlier here than in the rest of England. We may remember that the movement started with a Congregational Church in Norwich about 1580; and that, in 1581, " By a joyous consent they resolved to go into ye Low Countries where they heard there was freedom of religion." Of those exiles in Holland—on whose part Sir Walter Raleigh used to speak in Parliament—more than half were from the Eastern Counties. When, much later, they decided to attempt a new colony in the new world, over forty out of the one hundred and two members of the " Mayflower " Company were East Anglians. But by this later time ideas of New England had cleared somewhat; and the very title " Company " gives an important clue. There is,

in the accounts, no more talk of gold. New England begins to look like some true counterpart of its wild self. It is still an island, indefinite in the interior, separated from the better known Virginian Colony by Hudson's River, and peopled by a milder race of "Salvages." Its mines are replaced by "Raspasses, and a little berrie which we call among us Blues, which are very good to eate." Pride comes tumbling from nuggets down to oysters, and from diamonds to fish. We hear again and again about the fish; and Dee and Gilbert and Hakluyt and John Smith are at last vindicated in the exhortation: "Let not the meannesse of the word *Fish* distaste you, for it will afford as good gold as the mines of *Guiana* or *Timbatu*, with lesse hazard and charge, and more certaintie and facilitie." Indeed, it is a very cheering bit of irony that the reasons why the Brownist movement hit upon New England are precisely those for which the earlier adventurers dropped the enterprise. There was no gold—so much the less dissension; there were no Spaniards —so much the better. There was nothing to disturb what should be a sound commercial proposition, except the weather and the Indians. Upon the economic side, the practical impress of circumstance made the Pilgrim leaders sensibly acute.

That combination of religious zeal, ballasted by business, and business zeal inspired by religion, has surely never given a clearer indication of its power than in the building of New England. Varied as are the personalities of those who wrote the

chronicles, we see the purpose running through them all. A faith, to us tremendous and almost inconceivable, was indeed their only firm foundation: a faith in the Divine Right of their enterprise, and in their own self-righteousness as a community. They made miscalculations; they had many notions which seem quaint, and still partook of an age which was more bloody than one likes; they were so earnest that they often seem to lack all humour, and they had a ready hand to suppress levity. Their faith brimmed over in many little way, and it may have led to canting later on; it was bound to lead to narrowness, but it was bound to lead to work; and I do not think we can discredit the real sinewy effort put forward by the little colony. "Not," as Winslow puts their aim in his "Relation," "that we altogether, or principally, propound profit to be the main end of that we have undertaken, but the glory of God, and the honour of our country, in the enlarging of his Majesty's dominions."

The political significance came later, and was of course not wholly understood at once; but what I desired to dwell on were the sentiments of the early settlers who came from this part of the world. And I could find but little sentiment, or little explanation of the choice of place-names which are so often duplicated. The point, I think, is that they were too busy, too earnest, and even too shy to make very much parade of home-sickness. The documents we have are, in the beginning, chiefly business documents, sermons, and

heavy discussions of some point of doctrine. They named the villages with well-known names, but beyond that we know very little, and it does not do to make them out too picturesque in their emotion. The Roman colonist had prettier customs. He would take the glowing coals from the hearth-stone of the old home, and set them down alight upon the bare hearth of the new. The Anglo-Saxon is not as the Southerner, and we have not customs of such beauty. Howsoever, I still like to think that there were little gardens planted on occasion in New England for remembrance—planted, but with no fuss made over them.

Later on, of course, there is more detail; and the "Winthrop Papers" are a store of pleasant entertainment in the customs of the time. The servant trouble was as pressing to good housewives then as now; and Lowell (in "Among My Books") gives a beautiful digest of what is humorous (sometimes unconsciously humorous) in the personal relations of the Puritans. But still there is but little sentiment. The tears which have been later shed in verse are largely based on soft imaginings. My own chief sympathy is with those who wanted to but could not join the Company. The ones who stayed at home had just as strenuous a battle, and they have been less remembered by posterity. I have said nothing about the walk from Kimberley to Hingham Green, but as I reached that sleepy, out-of-the-world spot I could not help wondering about the similarity of spirit between some of those who did and who did not go across. I say similarity, by

no means sameness. Different forces came into play the moment they were separated; and even the similarity among the Puritan descendants has become highly differentiated in superficial things since then. But by and large, at least at Hingham, the differences will be sunk and the common elements enlarged; for in case you had forgotten it, there is one Hingham name that has outgrown all national boundaries. The Lincolns were a Hingham family, and in the little, old, grey church there is a bust of Abraham Lincoln to witness that to-day.

PRETTY DEREHAM

SINCE I have been speaking of England and America, it is fair to note one little difference which is evident in contrasting towns on either side. By and large, our towns have all been built about our railroads; the stations are the hubs from which streets radiate. Here, where the towns long antedate and have hardly been affected by the railways, they are like the figures in Watts' paintings, and have their backs turned to the observer. With that allowed for, it is possible to see why Borrow could rarely mention Dereham without the description "pretty"; nor, indeed, why Cowper made his last effort here to shake off melancholia. The one was born, the other died in Dereham. I am going to take the cheerful recollections first.

Borrow shared one peculiarity with Napoleon—he was always averse to giving his age, and generally stated it deceptively. It is not to be expected, then, that in the opening chapter of "Lavengro" he would be precise. "On an evening of July, in the year 18—, at East D——, a beautiful little town in a certain district of East Anglia, I first saw the light." The date was 1803, and the exact spot was a house in Dumpling Green. It is not more than a mile and a quarter

from the centre of the town; and as there are some interesting anecdotes about it the walk is much to be desired.

Having come along the Station Road as far as the town proper—that is to say to the London Road—just to learn the general lie of the land, the way to Dumpling Green is then simple and unmistakable. We turn to the left along the London Road, and follow this across railway tracks until we see in front of us and on the right-hand side a thatched inn, whose swinging sign announces in golden letters "The Jolly Farmers." Directly opposite this inn is the opening of a wide lane, hedged on either side. This, belying its name, is Dumpling Green. The way so far is clear; one time, however, I had to ask before setting out, and picked the most incongruous man possible in the clean town—a chimney-sweep. His directions, too complicated to repeat, were in terms exclusively of "pubs," the last of which, in memory of him, I have included here.

Dumpling Green, then, starts from "The Jolly Farmers," and its hawthorn and bramble hedges lend the suggestion that originally the ground was a proper green which never lost the name even when the enclosures took place. A few minutes' walk, passing several farmhouses, and we come to a tadpole pond upon the right. Just beyond and opposite is the birthplace of the character as strange as any who has put pen to paper.

The house is large; it had been occupied for some time then by Samuel Perfrement, Borrow's grandfather. This farmer was of Huguenot descent,

He had two daughters, Elizabeth and Ann, of whom a tale is told. Elsewhere the superstitious rites of East Anglia have been mentioned; there is one still found which states that if a young maid shall wash her linen white in running water and watch it drying by the fire for an hour before midnight, on the stroke of twelve she shall be shown the face of her future husband. None know how old this "Wake of Freya" is; but the desire holds for every age. Elizabeth was only sixteen. She was in the throes of disappointed love. In a flash of hope upon one bitter night she decided to obey the rites. Since running water is scarce at Dumpling Green she washed her garment in a pond which you will see to-day in the farmyard of the house; and with the door open, as tradition required, she hung what she had washed over a chair, and sat with her sister Ann in nude, shivering excitement. At last the clock began to strike

One!
Two!

A noise at the garden gate. They heard it creak in opening; they heard it slam viciously. "Before I could recover myself," said Ann, some years later, "my sister had sprung to the door and both locked and bolted it. The next moment she was in convulsions. I scarcely knew what happened; and yet it appeared to me for a moment that something pressed against the door with a low moaning sound."

Elizabeth never throve after this sudden shock. Ann, less venturesome, was more successful. A

DEREHAM CHURCH

troupe of Norwich actors came to Dereham ; she was allowed to play some minor part upon their stage, and behind the footlights she attracted the attention of the soldier-pugilist, Thomas Borrow. They were married, lived a life of roving with his regiment, and George Borrow was born when ten years had elapsed and they were back for a short stay in Dumpling Green. When he was a month old, they moved again ; when he was six, they returned. From this last date come his recollections as narrated in " Lavengro."

" I love to think on thee," he writes, years after in the octagonal summer-house at Oulton, " pretty, quiet D——, thou pattern of an English country town, with thy clean but narrow streets branching out from thy modest market-place, with thine old-fashioned houses, with here and there a roof of venerable thatch, with thy one half-aristocratic mansion, where resided thy Lady-Bountiful—she, the generous and kind, who loved to visit the sick, leaning on her gold-headed cane, whilst the sleek old footman walked at a respectable distance behind. Pretty, quiet D——, with thy venerable church, in which moulder the mortal remains of England's sweetest and most pious bard."

There is no need for an outside hand to describe the boy's existence. We have in his own writing :

A lover of nooks and retired corners, I was as a child in the habit of fleeing from society, and of sitting for hours together with my head on my breast. What I was thinking about, it would be difficult to say at this distance of time ; I remember perfectly well, however, being ever conscious of a peculiar heaviness within me, and at times of a strange

sensation of fear, which occasionally amounted to horror, and for which I could assign no real cause whatever.

By nature slow of speech, I took no pleasure in conversation, nor in hearing the voices of my fellow-creatures. When people addressed me, I not unfrequently, especially if they were strangers, turned away my head from them, and if they persisted in their notice burst into tears, which singularity of behaviour by no means tended to dispose people in my favour.

So may we read on and see how he used to sit in the bright sunshine of the farmyard, drawing strange lines in the dust with his small fingers, an ape and a dog for his two companions. The farmyard was then as now the true entrance to the home; it lacked only the salmon-tinted shepherd's van that now forms a picturesque flash of colour. This farmyard once attracted a wandering Jew who entered and saw the child drawing in the dust, and we recall how the wanderer prostrated himself, for he saw in the strange lines "holy letters." To the front door of this cottage came one day a lady with a packet as a present for the lonely-minded boy. In it he found, and fell upon, Defoe. "And it was in this manner," says he, "that I first took to the paths of knowledge."

Other associations in Dereham cluster round the church. The approach by Church Street from the Market Place shows two towers, massive, and at first sight reminiscent of Wymondham. These gradually separate themselves until the left-hand greater one is seen to be a completely detached bell tower, where, incidentally, French prisoners were once kept in transit from Yarmouth to Norman

Cross. The right-hand tower is the one of the church proper which may be entered from the south. Inside, the building is not as fine as Wymondham Church, but apart from St. Withberga's Well there is one memorial of great value—the grave of William Cowper. He was the "sweetest and most pious bard" whom Borrow mentions. Borrow used to come to this church as a child, and tells about "the pew of black leather, in which I sometimes fell asleep." He had likewise some memories of Cowper, the greatest English poet between Pope and the group clustering round Wordsworth. Even those who remember no more of Cowper than "John Gilpin" will find a nook of sympathy within them for his despondent soul. He was a man who at two periods of life attempted suicide; he was insane, either confined or on the brink of it, for long stretches; he was a hypochondriac, and, late in life especially, a prey to melancholia.

Yet the resilience of human life is amazing, and many of Cowper's letters exhale a quiet and sincere serenity. The first time he heard the tale of Gilpin he lay awake at night laughing over it, and in the morning produced the ballad. And there was always the influence of Mary Unwin, the Puritan widow of boundless affection, who stayed with him even when he had delusions that she meant him harm. It is true that more effective inspiration came to him from other ladies; but what held his mind together in lucidity and happiness as long as possible was Mary Unwin's devoted care. She played the balanced flywheel in his life.

But by the time the Dereham connexion with Cowper began, Mary Unwin was rapidly losing strength. The long output of energy for others seems to have sapped her own power. She was older than Cowper, and now nearing seventy. She had paralytic strokes, and she who had so long supported him changed at last and drew him down. Religious horrors closed over them; they neither of them cared for life. The housekeeping went all wrong. Then came a friend to the rescue —Hayley, who wrote the verses upon Cowper's tomb—and in connexion with the relatives he moved the pair to various resorts. This last pilgrimage for happiness took them to Mundesley upon the coast, to Swaffham, and at last to Dereham. Two months after their arrival Mrs. Unwin died. Cowper, scarcely conscious, gazed at the corpse with one passionate cry of grief, and never mentioned her again. By the clean "modest market-place" he lingered some three years, his reason clouded, his power of composition gone. Only once there was a real revival of poetic faculty, and that because the theme was ever in his thoughts. "The Castaway" is the last expression of a sinking soul.

LYNN

KING'S LYNN was once a town of monastic fame; it held for many years the title "Lynn Episcopi," because of its relations with the See of Norwich. That was some while ago, however, and since King John came here in 1215 with his grant of a royal charter it has been held an appanage to the throne and preserves its present title. To come to King's Lynn from those parts of Norfolk we have been in so far is to come to the start of a new land—a land of marshes and of fens, the land of Hereward the Wake. I shall enter that land, or rather its drained counterpart, when I turn southward finally to Ely and to Cambridge. Now I am still bound north and along the coast.

If time is so arranged that there is an hour or two to wait in Lynn, before heading to Hunstanton (locally "Hunston") for the night, it is better. We shall then stroll to the docks and snuff the sea. Lynn is a port of history. Before the war she fought hard to maintain her standing, and "The King's Lynn Docks and Railway Company" sent cargoes seaward to Archangel and far-off Frisco, to Rudkjoburg and Baltimore, from Drammen down to Svenaborg, Athens and Buenos Ayres. Somehow I cannot see a list like that without a

sigh of wonder at the magic of the names. Townsfolk with some dash of roving blood, farmers from their glebe lands, drovers who had been relieved of cattle at the market—all used to come to the quay and watch a quaint array of little tramps who lay here resting with their decks agrime. They were such as would never have been noticed in New York or in Liverpool, where the liner—

The liner, she's a lady—

swings her skirts and passes by. But here in Lynn there was the intimacy which those fashion-ports forbade. Here a blunt-nosed tiny steamer would edge in naturally; she would be dirty; coal-dust for her face-powder, and she never learned to paint. The steamers that knew Lynn may have been things of shreds and patches, but they were honest. Without false pride, they knew this world of ours as few of us can know it—Fjellero to Newfoundland, Carls Crona down to Caen. A splendid ballad might be made in Lynn, and all from one or two old battered tramps, lying idle here and rusty, with their crews ashore. Even they are worthy of romances, for they have played their part in the great game. Nowhere is the picture better painted than by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch:

. . . let your imagination play on these old trade-routes, and you will not only enhance your hold on the true springs of history; you will wonderfully seize the romance of it. You will see, as this little planet revolves back out of the shadow of night to meet the day, little threads pushing out over its black spaces—dotted ships on wide seas, crawling trains of emigrant wagons, pioneers, tribes

on the trek, men extinguishing their camp fires and shouldering their baggage for another day's march or piling it into canoes by untracked river-sides, families loading their camels with figs and dates for Smyrna, villagers treading wine-vats, fishermen hauling nets, olive-gatherers, packers, wagoners, long trains of African porters, desert caravans with armed outriders, dahabeeyahs pushing up the Nile, busy rice-fields, puffs of smoke where the expresses run across Siberia, Canada, or northward from Capetown, Greenland whalers, Newfoundland cod-fishers, trappers around Hudson's Bay . . .

Well, you have there what a man can feel in standing on the quay at Lynn: a man who knows the magic of far-off places, and who echoes to the part that such a quay, or such a narrow, muddy river, may play in the whole scheme. If a man has never travelled far and yet feels that, he is not without some sight into the wonder of the world.

Very pretty writing is all that, perhaps; certainly it is written from the heart—but the fact remains that all too seldom do tramp steamers now come up to Lynn, to take their part among the threads pushing out over the black spaces. Before the war these things were common—now the occasion is so infrequent as to emphasize the feeling. When a man is past his first flush he realizes its true value; so is it with Lynn.

Now, with regard to Lynn as a town and not as a charming, decayed little port upon the tide-waters of the Ouse, there are some shrines to be visited. If we have wandered from the station to the quays by any of the various streets which lead directly to the sunset, we should come back past the principal church, St. Margaret's, the

Guildhall with its chequered front, and the prison with its shackles and chains above the door. The church was founded by the same Bishop de Lozinga whose hand is seen at Yarmouth and at Norwich. Inside the building lies its chief interest, some fine sepulchral brasses. The "Peacock Brass" of 1364 is especially fine, portraying a feast which even in the metal makes the mouth water, though perhaps the servitors are a trifle stiff and slow in bringing the birds to table. The name comes from the comestibles; so desirable a dish were peacocks that one guest is straddling across the board in anxiety for his share. This is not the only brass in the old church, but it is easily the best. As one might guess from Lynn's contact with the Lowlands, it is of Flemish workmanship.

In this church, about the middle of the eighteenth century, Dr. Burney was organist; while he held the post his daughter Fanny was born. Fanny was a clever and an interesting girl, but it is difficult to find any anecdotes about her early life; the closest thing to early romance, for instance, was that one of her friends called her "the dove." The prosaic Fanny instead of being interested in the compliment, analysed it and could trace the resemblance only to her "greenish-grey eyes." This was the same discrimination she later carried to London society. She went to town while still a girl; Horace Walpole, living at Strawberry Hill, quotes with keen delight a visit which she and her father made to him. Shortly afterwards her first novel, "Evelina," appeared anonymously. The knack which Fanny had of noting down spontaneous

impressions, her ability to seize upon trivialities and weave from them a real atmosphere of society, made the book a classic of its kind and the first modern novel of the type. From Fanny came much of the suggestion to her sister writers who were later to excel her—Jane Austen speaks of her with great appreciation in "Northanger Abbey"; and though the authoress was not disclosed upon the title-page, she could not long remain hidden. Dr. Burney was at that time giving music lessons to Mrs. Thrale's daughter; he confided the strict secret to Mrs. Thrale, and Mrs. Thrale to Dr. Johnson. Johnson warmed to the book immensely, got it almost by heart, said "he could not get rid of the rogue," and mimicked the characters with roars of laughter. So it began to go the rounds; the book was read by Sir Joshua Reynolds at meal times. He had to be fed by an attendant, so great was his interest. He learned the secret, passed it on, with the book, to Garrick, who sat up all night chuckling. Fanny Burney was becoming famous; she married and became Madame d'Arblay. But by the tragic compensation that often governs these things, the more famous she became the less could she regain that naïve observation and the simple charm that were her first gift to literature. Nothing else that she wrote was worth half her first attempt.

Lynn has many other varied associations and buildings of interest; the Red Mount chapel, a diminutive, octagonal building whose roof rivals, in a smaller way, that of King's College Chapel at Cambridge, can be quoted as an example of the

latter. From Lynn it is said the first polar expedition on record was sent forth in 1330; there was likewise a notable adventurer in George Vancouver, who was born in a half-timbered cottage standing in the yard of the Quaker Meeting-House. It is a long cry from the Ouse to that lovely, wooded isle on the world's far side which bears the name "Vancouver Island"; and to the city of that name, sloping down to the blue harbour from which ships go up to the Russian-sounding ports of the Alaskan promontory, even as from Lynn the trade goes to Archangel and this side of Siberia. In Lynn, too, are built many of the showmen's merry-go-rounds which tour the country behind the chains of traction engines. But these are things we must forgo for the moment. We have been treating Lynn as the King is wont to do—waiting here for the change of engines for the Hunstanton line—and too much detail cannot be considered lest we should miss that train.

Northward the railway curves from the town to follow the shoulder of the "promontory of Norfolck," as Evelyn used to call it; and on the left, just after leaving Lynn, is the warm red building of the grammar school, where the King presents each year a gold medal to the best scholar. There is no lack of competition for this trophy. Speaking of Lynn schools, memory naturally reverts to the strange case of Eugene Aram, at the time of his arrest an usher at a school in Lynn. This was the problem, and it is a knotty point in ethics. Aram was an extraordinarily clever and painstaking scholar in languages and philology;

THE CUSTOMS HOUSE, LYNN

his was one of those rare intellects whose loss would be a real set-back to knowledge, and whose ability to serve the community—even to become a notable figure in the history of British scholarship —was undeniable. But Aram had commited a murder, according to all circumstantial evidence. The question was, whether his life was better spared on account of his merits and his promise of good, or whether an inexorable justice should demand atonement for his crime. Ethically, a good deal of debate is possible ; actually, he was executed. After the expiation William Godwin and Bulwer both took up the point ; and Thomas Hood has, in " The Dream of Eugene Aram," one of the finest of his serious poems :

'Twas in the prime of summer time
An evening calm and cool,
And four-and-twenty happy boys
Came bounding out of school :
There were some that ran and some that leapt,
Like troutlets in a pool.

Away they sped with gamesome minds,
And souls untouched by sin ;
To a level mead they came, and there
They drave the wickets in ;
Pleasantly showed the setting sun
Over the town of Lynn.

Like sportive deer they coursed about,
And shouted as they ran,—
Turning to mirth all things of earth,
As only boyhood can ;
But the Usher sat remote from all,
A melancholy man !

So Hood goes on to tell the story, up to the end :

> That very night, while gentle sleep
> The urchin eyelids kissed,
> Two stern-faced men set out from Lynn
> Through the cold and heavy mist ;
> And Eugene Aram walked between,
> With gyves upon his wrist.

The train hardly gives time for this recollection before it halts at Wolferton, the station specially fitted up for the frequent visits of the King to Sandringham ; it is a station unique, without an advertisement on its platforms ; and then since we are not invited to that royal lodge (though it may be visited in the King's absence) we roll shortly afterwards into Hunstanton.

HUNSTANTON

HUNSTANTON is one of the few spots in England which properly enjoy a spring that is summer's prevision, and an autumn that is like the " Indian summer " of America. A week that once I spent at Hunstanton in early March was one to live long in the memory. The time of year was too early then for bathing, but there were walks and rides along the beach, and excursions inshore that I shall mention in a moment. Along the beach for miles the tide rolls the sand firm for the express privilege of exercise—not the soft sand which clogs the steps and tires, but an even and hard texture which is always an incentive to go farther. I would start along the cliffs and past the now deserted lighthouse ; or under them, where I wondered at their layer-cake formation, white and red conglomerate, with chocolate-brown carrstone at the bottom. The wind, as I was walking, blew crosswise from the Wash, and gulls were wheeling in the sun above. Past the links, still upon the sand, in the distance the figures of golfers were visible, a girl's tam-o'-shanter showing like a speck of scarlet paint ; though the same wind carried away lightly any chance remarks about the game. Imagination has it that words uttered on these links are borne away entire by

the breeze; and ships in the North Sea are often said to hear what they mistake to be the cry of gulls—in reality the anguished syllables from the far-off greens of Hunstanton: "*Stymied—Stymied—Stymied. . . .*"

Forgetting tea or picking it up as fancy willed at some tiny hidden hamlet, from these walks I came back ravenous, watching the sunset path of gold upon the Wash, a carpet spread across to Boston Stump. Such were some of the afternoons; and on those evenings, if I am to tell the whole truth, I over-ate prodigiously, drank a bottle of profitable Burgundy, and went to bed at such an hour as would shame the clock.

Some of the mild excursions went farther afield, in an effort to explore this part of Norfolk's shoulder. It is a land of wide fields, larger than most in England; a country of enterprising agriculture, ever since the famous "Coke of Norfolk." Near Wells, at Holkham, his experiments were carried out. The vast estate to which he succeeded was, as he used to say, so poor before that time that two rabbits were often seen fighting for the single blade of grass within a field. The entire surface soil was sand, but underneath he managed to find some marl. By extensive digging (which is the cause of many crater-like holes within this territory) he practically reversed Nature's disposition of the strata. Then was he indefatigable in introducing new crops—the mangel-wurzel as one instance. By the four-course system agricultural practice was completely altered, and the unproductive, melancholy region, so lonely that Coke's "nearest

neighbour was the King of Denmark," was transformed into the rolling, wealthy tract it is to-day. It is a pity that the secrets of such an achievement do not seem so popularly striking as the secrets of Lord Nelson's victories. The fat rabbits do, I think, appreciate them more ; and the fat rabbits are by no means always wrong.

This discovery of quiet conquest struck me with all the more pleasure in that I had come to this region not so much with the substantial economic side of history in mind as lured by the striking incidents which Nelson represents. This is Nelson's country, and a part which he loved well. His birthplace was at Burnham Thorpe, and my first expedition was by rail. The junction for the single-track branch line which runs across to Wells is Heacham. I stop there just a moment because of an obscure and pathetic death-register at Gravesend :[1]

1916. May 21. Rebeca Wrothe, wyff of Thomas Wrothe, gent., a Virginia lady borne, was buried in the Chauuncle.

The " Virginia lady borne " was Pocahontas, and her story is well known in school-books. There is advantages in recasting what we learnt at school, if we may tie the facts up with a pleasant village whose face looks upon blue water and whose

[1] The Church of St. George at Gravesend was burnt down in 1727, but the registers were preserved. I quote this death-notice from Smith's " Adventures and Discourses " (Cassell, 1883), p. 283 ; though it is there noted that two mistakes exist in the version given. The date should be March 21 ; and Rolfe's Christian name, as pointed out in the text, should be John.

red roofs run back through elms to the brown fields.

Imagination, then, goes backward farther than the pilgrims we were thinking of at Hingham, to the adventurers in the colonizing scheme which Raleigh started in Virginia—a name, of course, much more indefinable and comprehensive than the bounded region of the State to-day. After Raleigh's first attempt, with which he could not go in person, the leading figure in Colonial enterprise for some years was John Smith, who came from Willoughby in Lincolnshire, just across the Wash. Smith's "Adventures and Discourses" make much of Pocahontas as a "dear little maid," "the King's dearest jewel and daughter," saving his life, and coming in the dark night "through the irksome woods" to disclose Indian plots. The "King" is Smith's exaggeration—elsewhere he is called Emperor—of the chief Powhattan. Pocahontas was very young when first appearing on the scene, "a child of tenne years old; which not only for feature, countenance, and proportion, much exceedeth any of the rest of his people." For the next few years Smith was her hero, but he came back to England. After that Pocahontas successively protected Henry Spelman, a Norfolk boy, and John Rolfe (miscalled Thomas in the register quoted above). The latter came from Heacham, of a family which still survives. This protection was afforded in a region north of Raleigh's first plantation; and the part which Pocahontas lived in is well named Norfolk, since she displayed such a marked preference for East Anglians.

One is tempted to smile at exaggerated stories of the " Princess," but there is no doubt she had a warm heart. It is pretty to see how after Rolfe had been saved he confesses that his " thoughts became entangled and enthralled." But even on the frontier there was one serious drawback which he also conscientiously records. She was an " unbelieving creature." Here was an Indian girl in love with an Englishman of good family and decent impulses, and opposed by a bar that seemed far more real to him than to herself. Without a moment's hesitation she claimed baptism, and received instead of her old name the staid and far less fitting one, " Rebecca." It was, by the way, her second change of name, if I may judge from Smith. She was originally called Matoaka, and only altered in the first instance to Pocahontas " because the savage did think that, did we know her real name, we should have the power of casting an evil eye upon her. . . ." In any case, to Rebecca was quickly added Rolfe, in a variety of spellings ; and she came across to England with her husband in one of the white-winged ships at which her tribe had often wondered.

Had Pocahontas come to Heacham she might have found that Indian summer which I mentioned, and she would have had a fair chance of living in a land not entirely unlike her own. London fogs and London crowds, and above all the process of being shown off in high society, made a too abrupt transition. She died at twenty-two upon the ship that was to have taken her home. " Poor little maid ! " writes Smith, who spoke to her at Brentford.

I wonder if her people felt at all that their early fears were justified.

From Heacham, with its Hall and with these recollections, Burnham Market is a short run of perhaps twelve miles. There is something very attractive about short distances upon a single railway line. There is a casualness, an informality, a lack of luggage or encumbrance, which makes more magic and less journey of it. Half the pleasure of the Caliph's carpet came because he did not wait to pack a bag. A word, and he was off. So was I here—but not too fast, for this was no rushing express. It was George Gissing's " sober train which goes to no place of importance, which lets you see the white steam of the engine float and fall upon a meadow ere you pass." Writers have often noticed this little pleasure. Out of another pleat of memory comes the recollection that Mr. E. V. Lucas, when very young (and it is hoped he will forgive this quotation), constructed the following stanza :

> My heart leaps up when I behold
> A single railway line ;
> For then I know that wood and wold
> Are almost wholly mine.

But this single line is memorable to me for quite another reason, though it has the pleasures I have cited. It is like that East Anglian railway—perhaps it is the very one—which William McFee describes in " Harbours of Memory " as " a branch on a branch—almost a twig line, in fact." There was in his description a " duke's private station on the

twig line. And the duke in question often availed himself of the well-known eccentricity of the ducal classes by riding on the footplate instead of in his reserved compartment. . . . Dukes have more sense than many people give them credit for." Upon this line I too was accustomed to ride in the cab, and watch the signaller's tablet being passed from station to station as in a relay race, and paid attention to the gauges and the throttle and the easy manipulation of the Westinghouse. That is the nearest I expect to be to the privilege of the nobility. It is not the best way of seeing the country, but it is vastly the most amusing way of travelling. The engineer read " Kenilworth," and knew more anecdotes about the local history than I could well record; the fireman read Upton Sinclair, and wanted to know all about American politics.

There are seven Burnhams in the radius of a few miles, and Burnham Market, a straggling town, owns the station for them all. In particular it is close to Burnham Thorpe. To reach Nelson's birthplace we walk perhaps a mile—as was true at Dereham, Norfolk miles are short. The road, almost as quiet as a lane, turns sharply to the right just after leaving the station, crosses the railway, and proceeds to wander over a little hill. There is no topographical reason why it should not wind round this almost circular rise; but either through perversity or an innate desire for the view, it goes right over the top.

It must not be thought from this that the hill

amounts to anything in itself—the total rise is only a few feet. But the view obtained by virtue of the road's enterprise is wholly disproportionate to this small elevation. We have the country spread out in a panorama under a clear blue sky. Around the horizon banks of cloud, as if great drifts of snow fantastically turreted, are visible under the background of airy indigo; their watchful ring seems to have eyes as we have, to focus on the country in the centre. I have three times been by Burnham Thorpe, and on each occasion it was as though a blue dish, edged with flaky whiteness, was overturned above my head. Turning at the summit of our hill to look north, at the left lies Burnham Market, with its red-brick houses rising out of the green and brown fields; beyond this a ridge of woods, outstanding like a hairbrush to comb the clouds if they ever should come near. A little farther to the right in the distance lies the furrowed water of the blue North Sea, and closer to us comes, outlined, a church with a cylindrical and castellated tower. Then are more fields whose colours rise to cut off the sea; a few scattered farmhouses radiate from the nucleus of an old Martello tower. The sea, however, claims its part again and reappears to the right, stretching under the cloudbank out to the Dogger Bank and beyond to Scandinavia. Another church, a windmill making slow time in the light wind, and more "wood and wold" until we are three-quarters of the way round and gazing at Burnham Thorpe, church, hamlet, little topaz pools of water, all lying in a hollow at our feet. So I looked long; then took the road again to reach the village.

It is only fair, after having delayed remarks so long, to refer to the man who lured us here. If some time you reopen Southey's "Life of Nelson" you will recall the stories at the beginning of Horatio's boyhood. He was born in the old parsonage, now decayed to stables for the use of the new rectory. His father was the rector of the village. The sons were sent away to school at North Walsham; here may I quote Southey about Horatio:

> Once, after the winter holidays, when he and his brother William had set off on horseback to return to school, they came back, because there had been a fall of snow; and William, who did not much like the journey, said it was too deep for them to venture on. "If that be the case," said the father, "you certainly shall not go; but make another attempt, and I will leave it to your honour. If the road is dangerous, you may return; but remember, boys, I leave it to your honour!" The snow was deep enough to have afforded them a reasonable excuse; but Horatio was not to be prevailed upon to turn back. "We must go on," said he: "remember, brother, it was left to our honour!"

That is perhaps not altogether legend, and was characteristic of the boy. Having it read to us at school, the remembrance is very strong of how unfair we thought it to put boys on their honour; and all our sympathy was with William. Schoolboy honour is, as has often been remarked, a curious thing; reminiscent of that penurious gentleman travelling in the Southern States, who had no railroad ticket. When the conductor's approach was imminent, this individual dived underneath the seat, remarking in a muffled voice from that position to his neighbour above, "I leave it to your sense of honour."

Well, the next story Southey tells is illustrative of this sense of honour. "There were some fine pears growing in the schoolmaster's garden, which the boys regarded as lawful booty, and in the highest degree tempting, but the boldest among them were afraid to venture for the prize. Horatio volunteered upon this service; he was lowered down at night from the bedroom window by some sheets, plundered the tree, was drawn up with the pears, and then distributed them among his fellows without reserving any for himself. 'He only took them,' he said, 'because every other boy was afraid.'"

The heroism of this brave spirit in its weak body, racked with the ague, which he feared worse than any human enemy, has always been well recognized. The greatness of his work, as Professor Seeley says, has been often overlooked. He reconquered the Mediterranean for England; dissolved, at a blow, all Napoleon's dreams of Oriental conquest; broke up the system then in vogue of armed neutrality. Napoleon remarked when he was a broken man, "it was the Spanish ulcer that ruined me." Tracing far causes back, it was Nelson's victories that allowed the Spanish ulcer to grow.

In Burnham Thorpe the only inn bears Nelson's face as figurehead; there is a Nelson Hall in the tiny village with many relics in it, and every child and person that one meets knows that they have at least one famous native. But in keeping with the first paragraph of my description, considering the splendour of the day, the colouring of the warm fields, the thirst after the pleasant stroll, I did not think too seriously about Nelson. I went in to the

post office, which is likewise the only shop, and inquired about tea. I was referred to a near by cottage, and was served by Peggotty's own self in Mid-Norfolk guise ; and I was able to get back to Hunstanton in time to catch the sunset.

That is one excursion pictured. Another was along the same lines to Wells, a sleepy little port where one old inhabitant is said to have spent twenty years upon the quay without ever having visited the church or station. My informant was, of course, the engineer. I asked him about Walsingham. " Ah ! " he said, " that's historic." He applied the same adjective to all the little villages near by, in turn, and with the enthusiasm of an antiquary ; but I have to pass by Binham, Great and Little Snoring and the Barshams. To come to Walsingham is to force some recollections of the mediaeval mind. At Dereham there was a famous miracle in St. Withberga's Well, and pilgrims from the country over flocked to be cured by its waters ; but the shrine at Walsingham eclipsed by far all thoughts of Dereham. The shrine was supposed to be an exact copy of the Virgin's tomb at Nazareth, and in the twelfth century this was enough to attract a host of true believers along the Pedder's Way ; but later, when the Mohammedans seized the original shrine in the Holy Land, the monks of Walsingham caused it to be known that the Virgin herself had flown from Palestine and taken up her dwelling in the Norfolk shrine. So were there thousands of pilgrims who believed, and came to see this holy

place. " Our Lady of Walsingham " came to be a great factor in England ; Kings did their obeisance here, and foreigners came over for the privilege of visiting. It will not seem sacrilegious if an instance is given of the strength of this belief. A pilgrim, having come lame, was cured and attempted to mount a horse. He prayed to Our Lady to assist him, then made a vigorous spring, and fell off on the other side. Getting up and wiping his clothes he said, " Our Lady has assisted me too much."

That thousands of pilgrims used to come, apart from documentary evidence, is indicated by the popular ballads which sprang up about the pilgrimages. One old and pretty one began—quoted, incidentally, in that old play " The Knight of the Burning Pestle " :

> As ye came from the holy land
> Of Walsingham
> Met you not with my true love
> By the way as you came ?

Again, there is the rhymester's lament which Mr. Dutt quotes in the " Highways and Byways," along with another version of the preceding somewhat clipped and pared by Elizabethan song-writers, who did not like the loose refrain of the older stanzas. The lament goes :

> Bitter, bitter oh to behoalde
> The grass to growe
> Where the walles of Walsingham
> So stately did showe.

There is also from Hunstanton the good cross-country motor or cycle ride to Houghton-in-the-Brake, so called from the rich carpeting of fern,

PRIORY REMAINS, WALSINGHAM

where Houghton Hall stands as the finest country house in Norfolk, in the midst of its woods and lawns and deer park. Houghton is reminiscent of a very different age than Walsingham, and of a different type of people. The Walpoles had been living in this neighbourhood for centuries; but it is to Sir Robert Walpole and his son Horace that the most intimate associations go back. From the twelfth century we skip to the eighteenth; from a credulous to a hard-drinking society; from monks and shrines to Sir Robert, the responsible Prime Minister, and Horace, the epicure, to whom "small things always appeared great, and great things small." It is said, and with some plausibility, that the removal of the village of Houghton from its old position round the park to its present site gave rise to Goldsmith's "Deserted Village"; but what is more pleasant than the story of the village is the picture of Sir Robert coming to his country home when his long career as Minister was over; the journey broken at Swaffham, where Sturge, the Houghton runner and Sir Robert's man, met the travellers; and, dressed in flannel and belted, ran with a lighted torch in front of the coach, along those winding roads, over heath and dale, and at last through the gates and up the straight avenue to the old hall. Sir Robert loved Houghton steadfastly, though to his son it was somewhat out of the way of gossip and the dainty things of his desire. Sir Robert wanted solitude after London; Horace wanted London, and company after the solitude of Houghton. "I desire to die," said Horace, "when I have nobody to laugh with me";

and there were too few dilettantes in Norfolk to laugh at Horace's style of wit. He revolted at the heavy eating and the heavy drinking of the Norfolk squires, and longed for delicacy in everything except a joke.

And yet in the sixteen volumes of letters for whose rich and gossipy vein Walpole is unexcelled by any other letter-writer, there are some glimpses of a love for the place where he was brought up, deeper than ever he suspected as a boy. He came back in 1761, and wrote:

Here I am at Houghton! and alone! in this spot, where (except for two hours last month) I have not been in sixteen years! Think, what a crowd of reflections! No, Gray, and forty churchyards, could not furnish so many; nay, I know one must feel them with greater indifference than I possess, to have patience to put them into verse. . . . When I had drunk tea, I strolled into the garden. . . . In the days when all my soul was tuned to pleasure and vivacity (and you will think, perhaps, it is far from being out of tune yet), I hated Houghton and its solitude; yet I loved this garden, as now, with many regrets, I love Houghton. . . . To-morrow I shall be distracted with thoughts, or at least images of a very different complexion. I go to Lynn, and am to be elected on Friday. . . .

Then, dated six days later, comes the postcript to this same letter to George Montagu:

Think of me, the subject of a mob, who was scarce ever before in a mob, addressing them in the town-hall, riding at the head of two thousand people through such a town as Lynn, dining with above two hundred of them, amid bumpers, huzzas, songs, and tobacco, and finishing with country dancing at a ball and sixpenny whisk! I have borne it all cheerfully; nay, have sat hours in *conversation*, the thing upon earth that I hate; have been to hear

misses play on the harpsichord, and to see an alderman's copies of Reubens and Carlo Marat. Yet, to do the folks justice, they are sensible, and reasonable, and civilized; their very language is polished since I have lived among them. I attribute this to their more frequent intercourse with the world and the capital, by the help of good roads and post-chaises, which, if they have abridged the King's dominions, have at least tamed his subjects. Well, how comfortable it will be to-morrow, to see my parroquet, to play at loo, and not to be obliged to talk seriously!

Walpole was always a rebel against the seriousness of life; though in cases such as the American Revolution he did not hesitate to express himself, as forcibly and sincerely as Burke, against the King's stupidity and for the sake of liberty. But after all these were the things he liked to jot down—stories about the parish churches near Houghton. In some "it was the custom to separate the men from the women. A clergyman, being interrupted by loud talking, stopped short, when a woman, eager for the honour of the sex, arose and said:

"'Your reverence, it is not among us.'

"'So much the better,' answered the priest, 'it will be over the sooner.'"

Again: "A vicar and curate of a village, where there was to be a burial, were at variance. The vicar not coming in time, the curate began the service, and was reading the words:

"'I am the resurrection . . .'

when the vicar arrived, almost out of breath, and, snatching the book out of the curate's hands, with great scorn, cried:

"'*You* the resurrection! *I* am the resurrection!' and then went on."

THE FENLAND

I LEFT Hunstanton in the morning, setting out early lest the day's strength should get too much hold upon me, and sap my will to go. At Lynn I broke the journey for an hour, to see in morning light what I had missed before—a market day. The cattle market is close by the station ; it is no such vast affair as some, but the bellowing comes intermittent, low and long like the deep-sea syren of a liner, as the brown heads and horns uplift above the stalls and a flash is seen of an uncouth, puzzled intellect, uncomprehending but alarmed. Then there are the sheep ; and I saw a scattered flock, darting about with unexpected originality and speed, and opposed on various sides by townsfolk pressed into service for the emergency. Shouting and a confused clamour on the one side ; desperate and panting effort on the other ; and the battle had its climax in an epic deed. To sing it, one would sing the praises of a tiny boy. Far smaller than Jackie Coogan of "The Kid," this shaver could have run underneath a full-sized sheep ; upon his head was a large cap for a helmet, and in his hands a stick twice his own length. Full tilt he ran at the stubbornest bell wether, locked his one fist in the forelock, and with stick in the other belaboured the recalcitrant until he

surrendered and marched breathless to the fold. The remaining sheep followed meekly when this issue had been decided, and soon the scene was quiet. The boy disappeared, but I saw him half an hour later playing marbles with some other urchins, and far less conscious of his heroism than was I. The corresponding action for a man would be to seize an elephant in full flight and compel submission.

Leaving Lynn, I am reminded that the meridian of my trip is over, and the erratic line of my wanderings northward finds a contrast in the swift precision of the route south. The reason why it can be so straight is the flatness of the Marshland, the land of Hereward the Wake. Yet there is no reason for unconscionable hurry. As something of a drag upon my homing instincts I drew a sketch-map of this country before the draining was accomplished ; and before the map was done I had a hundred strong desires to look up the associations of the fens and meres, in the old days when the birdlife was such as finds the faintest reproduction now upon the Norfolk Broads. On that map it will be noticed that the sea, though hemmed somewhat by the Romans, came down to Wisbech ; and that from Lynn to Lincolnshire there was a passage by the sand which all remember who recall King John.

I have mentioned the charter which John gave to King's Lynn ; and in keeping with the tradition of good feasting held in Walpole's time at Houghton, the entertainment of the King in 1215 was lavish to the point of danger. In those days King John was waging his last unsuccessful fight against the Barons. With wonderful energy and " hot haste "

his impetuous and unstable nature kept his little army on forced marches for weeks together. He came to Lynn, this time by way of Wisbech. After three days' stay, tempering his digestion with peacocks, he left the town on the 12th of October. His baggage train, laden with treasures and supplies, including a private shrine, followed across the marshes and the sands by the old track. It was, however, a dangerous time of year. The tides were high, and passage was only possible upon the very moment of the ebb. On the 12th they were too late to catch this opportunity; and on the 13th they woke to find the water lapping against the Roman Wall. As the mist rose they waited eagerly to see the waves go down—they had to cross that day. One might suspect that it was Friday the 13th; certainly a north wind seemed evilly inspired to pile the waters up in this pocket of coast, and the gulls themselves were malevolent in screaming at the king and eyeing his rich treasures with their beady eyes. At last the moment came for which they waited. An order given, the train, a mile long at the very least, pressed forward anxiously over the treacherous path. Slow work at best, fear made them frantic in their haste. Quicksands clutched at them, animals fell under their heavy burdens, axles became mired. One by one were wagons left behind, hopelessly stuck, and drivers on the loosened horses hasted to help the foremost on to safety. They were in sight of the other side; the best of the teams were plunging through the last deep channel, when the shouts of men behind warned them of the tidal wash that was sweeping

THE OLD FENLAND

in. A warning, but in vain; with traces cut, a few swam to the hard ground to follow the king, and turned for one last glimpse of the tossing heads and hands and harness of their fellows. The seagulls screamed above them, and the wind blent other crys with the gulls'; but of King John's treasures and of his men and horses nothing more was seen save by the sand sharks who came nosing snake-like in.

Such is the story, and efforts are still made to-day to find that treasure under ploughed fields. It may be possible. King John never recovered it. He had not seen the disaster, but had spurred on to a feast of, in one account, peaches and cider; in another, stewed lampreys and cream; according to my idea of him he had them all. He was no lovely character, and no sympathy attaches to his curious end. On top of his crude surfeit the news arrived. It completely curdled him, and he died at Newark.

Having made my map, and having stood upon the sea-wall to look out upon the Wash, across the endless flats of sea-marsh, I could understand the Fens. The flats of mud and sand are endless, not because you cannot see beyond them—there are drifts of smoke and sails beyond which mean the sea—but because you cannot plant your foot on any stable edge. The mental problem raised is just as old as logic; older than Zeno's paradoxes; and the Greeks would have had fine fun with it. Here, most definitely, is the land; there, most definitely, is the sea; but betweeen there are some miles of sexless character, a fitting resting-place for Sciron's body. You cannot plant your foot upon a margin—there is none. "Nowhere that I

have been to in the world," says Mr. Belloc, " does the land fade into the sea so inconspicuously." Take away the sea-wall, and the Fens were but " the continuation inland of this sea-morass." Since the sea-wall has moved as much as I have shown, you see no reason why it should remain exactly where it is. Why not push it outward, with a channel for Lynn Deeps, until it runs at last from Hunstanton across to somewhere near Skegness ?

That is the sort of question that I think a Roman would have asked. It is not hard to catch a tiny glimpse of Romans in this neighbourhood ; to see how they gesticulated when they saw the swamps and everglades, and how their practical and engineering habits made them note the line of wolds, from the Northampton Uplands on to Lincoln Edge, which drained into this basin. It is a fact to make one realize the length of Roman stay in Britain, and to conjure up a picture of the wildness of the inland area, that they considered as vital the clearing of these fens ; and, having once decided, with little waste of time they built their sea-wall, and dug the great Carr Dyke, a canal fifty-six miles long and fifty feet wide, running past the Nene at Peterborough to theWitham at Lincoln, to catch the water as it came down from the uplands and to pour it off into the two rivers. The engineering work was only started by the Romans, and it took a casual thousand years to get it finished ; but all the while the land was coming up, palpably emerging, and as the islands appeared they were in succession coveted. Even while the swamps between were still the homes of outlaws and of hunted men, the great monastic houses fastened on

the islands—Ely, Crowland, for example—and barges began to creep along the waterways with stone for the tremendous buildings. As in a transformation scene, the whole action takes place before your eyes, until at last, long after Rome, long after Hereward, long after lean and hungry monks, the golden plain emerges in the form which Cobbett praises. I wonder how many know his quaint "Rural Rides," and know the joyous enthusiasm with which he writes. "The whole country" (and we can see the pleasure with which he sits down for the description) "as *level* as the table on which I am now writing. The horizon like the sea in a dead calm: you see the morning sun come up just as at sea; and see it go down over the rim in just the same way as at sea in a calm. The land covered with beautiful grass, with sheep lying about upon it as fat as hogs stretched out sleeping in a stye. The kind and polite friends with whom we were lodged had a very neat garden and fine young orchard. Everything grows well here: earth without a stone so big as a pin's head; grass as thick as it can grow on the ground; immense bowling greens separated by ditches; and not the sign of a dock or thistle or other weed to be seen. What a contrast between these and the heath-covered sand-hills of Surrey, amongst which I was born!"

It is a play which hardly ever palls, the watching of the dualism between the human and his environment. It is a play one may see most picturesquely in England, where, under minute and delicate causes of climate, the old merges subtly and graciously into the new. Because the Fenland is one of the best stages in Eng-

land for these transformation scenes, I am putting emphasis upon it here. There are no striking or distracting novelties to lure the mind away. An old device of fictional detectives is to gaze at a blank wall when thinking. An old peace and understanding is known to sailors who reduce their world to an elemental circle of the sea. It is likewise a reasonable simplification, if you would understand what forces act together to make England, to study a part like the Fenland first. Here the processes of human history have been going on so long, so continuously, that there should be some chance of noticing them. It would seem very difficult to believe that the interplay of human action with this soil, poured forth lavishly and concentrated with effect, had not left some transfusion and some atmosphere about it.

Not the least wonderful of facts about the Fenland is that people may cross it easily and without a spark of realization. The principles of magic would lead one to infer upheavals of old desires. There is such a brooding possible upon this plain that anything might happen. The wonder is, I say, so little does. I have walked and cycled there with the best of my dim senses all receptive. In some ways I am by no means disappointed. If we fail in cases where we look to be astonished, we may gain by noticing what might seem trivial. For instance, in this half-seen process where man and country change together, there are some ways in which the land, the huge and stolid countryside, alters more rapidly than human habits. There might be many things to show this. One is that the region has completely moved away from the original connota-

tion of " marsh " and " fen," while the words are still used in their oddly undescriptive senses. *Fen* has now a local significance for rich, fat corn land, with a soil of vegetable mould ; *marsh* is used for pasture land, stiffer in nature, and productive of rich grass. Both terms persist in absolute defiance of their dictionary meanings ; but you cannot expect dialect to alter as quickly as the country. Whether or not that has any bearing on the main question of where, or how, all that is past has slipped behind us I do not know. I only claim that is the sort of queer little intimation which comes naturally to you as you sit by one of the church towers, where under a warm sun the sea wind blows for ever, clean and fresh, across these fields of waving grass and corn, and you may watch for hours the shimmering, shifting patterns of the grain, and hear the soft, animate rustle which it makes.

Not always desiring to skip over the whole history of the Fenlands, I remember taking from my pocket Kingsley's " Hereward the Wake," to follow for some hours the footsteps of his hero. Kingsley had in this romance a task much harder than in " Westward Ho ! " for the atmosphere of the Danelagh in the eleventh century is less vivid to us than that of England in Elizabethan times. Out of contradictory legends he had to piece together a convincing story, and perhaps there had to be a little too much lecturing on history. Still, the story is a fine one to re-read in intimate association with the country, whose waterways are now cut across by trains, and whose islands are now only such in name. The lowlands, flat and fertile, are the regions soonest

to be conquered in any sphere of history; but for the English of Hereward's breed to submit to the French-chanting monks was a thing beyond their understanding and contrary to their common sense. The spirit of Kett, the spirit even of the Pilgrims, may owe something to the Danes; and the Danelagh rose angrily from Trent and Sherwood to Chester and Leicester; from Huntingdon and Cambridge, "then a poor village on the site of an old Roman town," to the Wash. The struggle forced them to be Vikings again, to cluster in the hidden coverts along the creeks and waterways, to rely upon the fens to hide them, and to sally out for forays and surprises.

So far I have been paraphrasing Kingsley; some of his descriptions are too fine to forbear quoting in full:

They have a beauty of their own, these great fens, even now, when they are dyked and drained, tilled and fenced—a beauty as of the sea, of boundless expanse and freedom. Much more had they that beauty eight hundred years ago, when they were still, for the most part, as God had made them, or rather was making them even then. The low rolling uplands were clothed in primæval forest; oak and ash, beech and elm, with here and there, perhaps, a group of ancient pines, ragged and decayed, and fast dying out in England even then; though lingering still in the forests of the Scotch highlands.

Between the fields were open wolds, dotted with white sheep and golden gorse . . .; many a Danish "town," with its clusters of low straggling buildings round the holder's house, of stone or mud below, and of wood above; its high dykes round tiny fields; its flocks of sheep ranging on the wold; its herd of swine in the forest; and below—a more precious possession still—its herds of mares and colts, which fed with the cattle and the geese in the rich grass-fen.

Such was the Fenland; hard, yet cheerful; rearing a race of hard and cheerful men; showing their power in old times in valiant fighting, and for many a century since

in that valiant industry which has drained and embanked the land of the Girvii, till it has become a very Garden of the Lord. And the Highlander who may look from the promontory of Peterborough, the "golden borough" of old time; or from that Witham on the Hill, which once was a farm of Hereward the Wake's; or from the tower of Crowland, while he and Torfrida sleep in the ruined nave beneath; or from the heights of that Isle of Ely which was so long the camp of refuge for English freedom; over the labyrinth of dykes and lodes, the squares of rich corn and verdure—will confess that the lowlands, as well as the highlands, can at times breed gallant men. . . .

Hereward, with Martin Lightfoot running at his horse's heels, was one hero that it bred; from his early roving adventures he came back to fight the Conqueror; and it goes without saying that William did not earn the title "Conqueror" without having to justify it in many hard struggles. Hereward came back from the Continent by ship around the Norfolk coast and into the Wash. He brought his wife, Torfrida, and his famous mare, "Swallow." East Anglia is a region where women "still surpass all other races in these isles," quoting Kingsley, for "rich and delicate beauty"; so Torfrida made no notable addition. But even though East Anglia is likewise a region of horses, Mare Swallow was so remarkable that her wonders and her feats "were afterwards sung by many an English fireside, or in the forest beneath the hollins green by such as Robin Hood, and his merry men. The ugliest, as well as the swiftest, of mares she was, say the old chroniclers; and it was not till the stranger looked twice at her that he forgot her great chuckle-head, and noticed the greyhound flanks and drooping hind-quarters, the thighs let down into the hocks, the com-

pact loin, the extraordinary girth through the saddle, the sloping shoulder, the long arms, the flat knees, the large, well-set hoofs, and the all other points which showed her strength and speed, and justified her fame."

All this is by way of recalling the novel to the reader; it is one of those which we are tempted to read too early in life and then leave long untouched. But if you will pick it up again and read how Hereward took his mother, the Lady Godiva, to Crowland, you will have a fine appreciation for the sight from the carriage window over the green fens:

> And they rowed away for Crowland, by many a mere and many an ea; through narrow reaches of clear brown glassy water; between the dark-green alders; between the pale-green reeds; where the coot clanked, and the bittern boomed, and the sedge-bird, not content with its own sweet song, mocked the notes of all the birds around; and then out into the broad lagoons, where hung motionless, high over head, hawk beyond hawk, buzzard beyond buzzard, kite beyond kite, as far as eye could see. Into the air, as they rowed on, whirred up great skeins of wild fowl innumerable, with a cry as of all the bells of Crowland, or all the hounds of the Bruneswold; while clear above all their noise sounded the wild whistle of the curlews, and the trumpet note of the great white swan.

That is the expression of a lover of the country, as well as a Professor of History at Cambridge; and Kingsley goes on to tell of the bitter struggle waged by Hereward. Where should the outlaws go—pressed ever by the forces of the King?

"*To Ely*," answered Hereward.

And they went to Ely, and "there sat round the hall of Ely all the magnates of the East land and East sea. . . ." Ely was stormed, and Sir Deda, a doughty Norman knight, actually got to the

island as Kingsley describes. Then came the difficulties of a besieged community ringed around by foes; came Hereward's great exploit with Mare Swallow, when disguised as a potter he went to Brandon to see the King himself, and looked upon a greater man than he was, and escaped sad at heart but fearless as ever. At the end of the exploit, as he was riding the long way round upon the higher ground to regain his men, there came a moment's breathing:

He looked down over Swaffham, Quy,[1] and Waterbeach, and the rest of the tree-embowered hamlets which fringed the fen, green knolls on the shore of a boundless sea of pale-blue mist; and above that sea, to the far north, a line of darker blue, which was the sacred isle. As the sun sank lower, higher rose the mist; and the isle grew more and more faint, vaporous, dreamy, as fen-distances are wont to be. Was it not to fade away in reality; to become a vapour, and a dream, and leave him alone, and free? Earls, knights, housecarles, monks seemed all becoming phantoms, fading with their fading cause. Was it worth while to fight, to die, for them, for anything? What was William to him? What was England? Why play out the lost game to the last? Why not leave all behind, and ride down south—to the sea—the free sea, and the wild joys of the Viking's life? And he led the mare down the Rech-dyke, and up again on to the down, faltering, stopping, his head sunken on his breast, his heart sunken within.

Here I leave Hereward. He chose his part, the worse part, perhaps, for himself; at any rate he did not run away from his problems, even though they ran away with him and left him at the end a baresark man with one last blow left in him. "That blow," said the Norman Ascelin, "will be sung hereafter by minstrel and maiden as the last blow of the last Englishman. Knights, we have slain a better knight than ourselves."

[1] A curious name, perhaps derived from Cow-way.

ELY AND HUNTINGDON

FROM afar off, ahead of us and to the right as we come south across the Fenland, the minster of this "holy isle"

> Still ship-like on for ages fares
> And holds its course, so smooth, so true . . .

Or, as Fuller described it, "This presenteth itself afar off to the eye of the traveller, and on all sides, at great distance, not only maketh a promise, but giveth earnest of the beauty thereof." The ship, on a wide sea, is the best simile; and in its situation Ely Cathedral has the advantage of all others in England. Nevertheless, I think the most attractive picture is gone with the draining of the fens. It is an advantage to be rid of ague, no doubt; but not in all ways are we better off than King Canute, coming along the brown water in his royal barge. The ballad puts it:

> Merrily sang they, the monks at Ely,
> When Canut the King he rowed thereby;
> Row to the shore, men, said the King,
> And let us hear these monks to sing.

Of the foundress of the old monastery there are many tales, all creditable if not credible; and there are the usual stories circulated by the monks, of which I quote one from Dugdale:

> It is reported that this Earl *William* (deWarren) did violently detain certain lands from the Monks of Ely; for which, being often admonished by the Abbot, and not

making restitution, he died miserably: And, though his death hapned very far off the Isle of Ely, the same night he died, the Abbot lying quietly in his bed, and meditating on Heavenly things, heard the Soul of the Earl, in its carriage away by the Devil, cry out loudly, and with a known and distinct Voice, *Lord have mercy on me*; *Lord have mercy on me*. And moreover, that the next day after, the Abbot acquainted all the Monks in Chapter therewith: And likewise, that about four days after, there came a Messenger to them from the Wife of the Earl, with one hundred shillings for the good of his Soul, who told them, that he died the very hour as the Abbot heard the out-cry. But that neither the Abbot, nor any of the Monks, would receive it; not thinking it safe for them, for to take the Money of a damned person.

If the first part of this story, as the Abbot's hearing that noise, be no truer than the last, viz., that his Lady sent them One hundred shillings, I shall deem it to be meer fiction in regard the lady was certainly dead about three years before.

From the earliest days these Divine "judgments" have been made to work both ways at the pleasure of the interpreter, and Dugdale had good grounds for a scepticism he did not show, I note, with regard to William of the Strong Hand. Interpreters have likewise made more free with notable dispensations of God's wrath than with His mercies. At Huntingdon, up the sluggish River Ouse, was a collector of judgments in the other camp. Dr. Thomas Beard, the Puritan schoolmaster, used precisely the same methods as the monks in compiling his "Theatre of God's Judgments." Here is an example:

Doctor *Dunning*, the bloudy and wretched Chancellour of Norwich, who after he had most rigorously condemned and murthered a number of simple and faithful servants of God, was suddenly stricken with death even as he was sitting in his chaire. . . .

Many of the citations are of tyrants who used their power insolently, and suffered in consequence deaths that cannot be quoted. The book well fits in what with else we know of Dr. Beard, as a very earnest, learned, and severe schoolmaster. He was held in high estimation by the townsfolk of Huntingdon, and taught in the Grammar School (in the High Street), where Cromwell, and Pepys after him, was educated. To the south-east and towards Godmanchester the High Street leads past the house where Cowper lived with the Unwins ; but we shall continue to follow Dr. Beard's influence by going to the north-west, past Cromwell House, a successor to that in which Cromwell was born, towards Hinchinbrook House. The latter, still " a stately, pleasant house, among its shady lawns and expanses," as Carlyle mentions, belonged to Cromwell's ancestors and figures frequently in his biography.

The early life of Cromwell is by no means all that has been said about it. That he was an " apple-dragon " and even indulged in " pigeon-stealing " is possible enough, though hardly warranting the serious and laboured attention of his calumniators in the years following 1660 ; a variety of other and prodigious anecdotes are nothing better than " meer fiction," beautifully elaborated under bias. For my own facts I follow Sanford,[1] and from him I learn that Cromwell was an interesting boy, and came occasionally under the celebrated rod of Dr. Beard. One can imagine that the book of judgments had some influence ; yet no extraordinary one, for Cromwell's family, and the

[1] " Studies and Illustrations of the Great Rebellion " (London, 1858).

atmosphere in which he grew up, were tolerant to kings and great men. Indeed, when James I came south in 1604 he stayed at Hinchinbrook, and had, in his own words, the best reception since he left Edinburgh. Though the incident of Oliver's first sight of royalty is a pretty one, it was too early to make much lasting impression except upon his family. The point is that Dr. Beard's admonitions won out, but only gradually, and more in the way of general "moral endowments" than as any early conviction.

After his Cambridge days, and his early marriage in London, he came back to Huntingdon, and lived there quietly "neither in any considerable height nor yet in obscurity." If reports of a wild youth are true, it seems that a mental revolution came about this time, and it was in these years that he became a Puritan. There was the period of depression and inaction, a gradual healthy recovery leading to useful duties in political life, and he ceased to be "the splenetic dreamer of Huntingdon." He sold most of his property in Huntingdon in 1631, and rented some grazing-lands at St. Ives, five miles down the river, and came thus both in space and time nearer to Ely and his sudden rise to fame. At St. Ives it is recorded that he went to the parish church, generally "with a piece of red flannel round his neck, as he was subject to an inflammation in his throat." It is interesting to have a picture of the man before he went to Ely; and though Oliver's Steward of the Household was writing this much later, it may serve for some indication. It is from a personal letter of Maidstone to the elder John Winthrop.

Before I pass further, pardon me in troubling you with the character of his person, which, by reason of my nearness to him, I had opportunity well to observe. His body was well compact and strong; his stature under six feet (I believe about two inches); his head so shaped as you might see it a store-house and shop both, of a vast treasury of natural parts. His temper exceeding fiery, as I have known, but the flame of it kept down for the most part or soon allayed with those moral endowments he had. He was naturally compassionate towards objects in distress, even to an effeminate measure; though God had made him a heart wherein was left little room for any fear but what was due to himself, of which there was a large proportion, yet did he exceed in tenderness toward sufferers. A larger soul, I think, hath seldom dwelt in a house of clay than his was. . . .

From 1636 till the beginning of hostilities in 1647 Cromwell lived in the tithe house, by the churchyard of St. Mary's Church, and was Governor of the Isle of Ely. In this capacity it was natural that he did not always agree with the bishop; but, in spite of the still clinging popular belief, Cromwell himself was no smasher of idols. "Take heed," he wrote in reproof to Crawford, "of being sharp, or too easily sharpened by others, against those to whom you can object little but that they square not with you in every opinion concerning matters of religion." As the political situation grew more acute, on the green in front of his house he used to drill and instruct his troop of cavalry, under the newly formed "Eastern Counties Association." "Infinite great," says a military teacher of the time, "are the considerations which dependeth on a man to teach and govern a troop of horse"; and the beginning of the famous "Ironsides" meant a great deal more work for Cromwell than

the last touch of his teaching—the precept, "Say your prayers and keep your powder dry."

I had half forgotten a picturesque incident that occurred close to Huntingdon. I am referring to the adventures of Samuel Pepys. When the Dutch came up the Thames in June, 1667, the diarist sent his father and his wife to Huntingdon by coach, at two hours' warning, and "with about 1300*l.* in gold in their night-bag." This sum was buried by the fugitives at their house at Brampton, close by Huntingdon. Nevertheless (the entry is a week later),

> My wife did give me so bad an account of her and my father's method in burying of our gold, that made me mad: and she herself is not pleased with it, she believing that my sister knows of it. My father and she did it on Sunday, when they were gone to church, in open daylight, in the midst of the garden; where, for aught they knew, many eyes might see them: which put me into trouble, and presently cast about how to have it back again to secure it here, the times being a little better now.

The opportunity did not occur until the middle of October, when—the 10th to be precise—the entry gives the picture to which I was referring:

> Up [says Pepys at Brampton] to walk up and down in the garden with my father, to talk of all my concernments: about a husband for my sister, whereof there is at present no appearance; but we must endeavour to find her one now, for she grows old and ugly. My father and I with a dark lantern, it being now night, into the garden with my wife, and there went about our great work to dig up my gold. But, Lord! what a tosse I was for some time in, that they could not justly tell where it was: but by and by poking with a spit we found it, and then began with a spudd to lift up the ground. But, good God! to see how sillily they did it, not half a foot under ground, and in the

sight of the world from a hundred places, if any body by accident were near hand, and within sight of a neighbour's window: only my father says that he saw them all gone to church before he began the work, when he laid the money. But I was out of my wits almost, and the more from that, upon my lifting up the earth with the spudd, I did discern that I had scattered the pieces of gold round about the ground among the grass and loose earth: and taking up the iron head-pieces wherein they were put, I perceived the earth was got among the gold, and wet so that the bags were all rotten, and all the notes, that I could not tell what in the world to say to it, not knowing how to judge what was wanting, or what had been lost by Gibson in his coming down: which, all put together, did make me mad: and at last I was forced to take up the head-pieces, dirt and all, and as many of the scattered pieces as I could with the dirt discern by candle-light, and carry them up into my brother's chamber, and there locke them up till I had eat a little supper: and then, all people going to bed, W. Hewer and I did all alone with several pails of water and besoms at last wash the dirt off the pieces, and parted the pieces and the dirt, and then began to tell them by a note which I had of the value of the whole (in my pocket). And I do find that there was short above a hundred pieces: which did make me mad; and considering that the neighbour's house was so near that we could not possibly speak one to another in the garden at that place where the gold lay (especially my father being deaf) but they must know what we had been doing, I feared that they might in the night come and gather some pieces and prevent us the next morning; so W. Hewer and I out again about midnight (for it was now grown so late) and there by candle-light did make shift to gather forty-five pieces more. And so in and to cleanse them: and by this time it was past two in the morning; and so to bed, and there lay in some disquiet all night telling of the clock till it was day-light.

This is one of the most graphic and diverting pictures in the whole *Diary*. Nowhere else is the equable Pepys "made mad" thrice in such short space.

GRANTCHESTER

ONE cannot be expected to sweep into neat prose anything very definite as a memory of Cambridge. In which quadrangle are we going to open our attack? Through what "college window"? Whose footsteps are we following? What do we expect to see? The problem is more complicated than at Oxford, where the city forms a better scaffolding for the university, and one can catch a slice of the whole history from an angle of wall in New College gardens. Cambridge seems less focused, more diffuse, harder to picture as a whole. It wanders less definably out into the flat country; and, indeed, I think that is our clue. The Backs are really not well named. They are more important than the Cambridge fronts. The river is more intimate than it is at Oxford, and it leads directly to fields and meadows whose influence has been more commemorated. They form the country which lives in Chaucer, in Milton, in Cowley, in FitzGerald's "Euphranor"—the country in which one nowadays remembers Rupert Brooke.

The trouble about Cambridge, naturally enough, is the multiplicity of detail which bombards attention from any simple line that it could follow easily. Upon occasion I have tried to trace one of the most attractive themes, the mediaeval spirit which

urged on the growth of universities. Take, for instance, one picture from the later Middle Ages—those ages not half so dark as they have sometimes been painted. The character is the wandering scholar, the words are from Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch :

He is young, and poor, and careless. He tramps it on foot, and, when his pocket is empty, has no shame in begging ; and men find a religious reward in doling him a penny : he is being bound for one of the great universities, of whose learning the world has heard ; for Oxford or Cambridge, or for Paris, or, farther yet, for Bologna, for Salerno. The roads of Europe are full of his like. No one quite knows how it has happened. The schools of Remigius and of William of Champeaux (we will say) have given Paris a certain prestige when a mysterious word, a rumour, spreads along the great routes, of a certain great teacher called Abelard whose voice will persuade a man's soul almost out of his body. The fame of it spreads almost as pollen is wafted on the wind : but spreads, and alights, and fertilizes. Forthwith, in all the far corners of Europe, young men are packing their knapsacks, bidding good-bye to their homes, waving back to the family at the gate as they dare the great adventure and fare (say) for Paris, intellectual queen of Europe.

The desire of the moth for the star ! The ineffable spell of those great names—Paris, Oxford, Cambridge, Bologna, Salamanca ! These young men reach at length the city which has been shining in their imagination. The light fades down its visionary spires to a narrow noisome medieval street in which the new-comer is one of a crowd, a turbulent crowd of the wantonest morals. But youth is there, and friendship : to be kept green through the years of later life, when all this young blood is dispersed, and the boys have shaken hands, not to meet again, and nothing remains in common to Dick of York and Hans of Hungary but a memory of the old class-room where they blew on their fingers, and took notes by the light of unglazed windows, and shuffled their numb feet in the straw.

GRANTCHESTER CHURCH

Those were the times when, without fire in the chilly rooms, the students at Cambridge were "fayne to walk or runne vp and downe half an houre to gette a heate on theyr feete whan they go to bed"; and we have another description of them as "menne not werye of theyr paynes, but very sorye to leue theyr studye." Let us suppose that of the seven liberal arts our "Dick of York" had chosen Grammar, and was familiar with Alexander de Villa Dei, and had read the "Ars Grammatica" of Ælius Donatus, with Priscian as his special patron saint. He came at last to his degree, and for the ceremony the mysterious Master of Glomery brought him, with the other "sons," to St. Mary's Church for eight o'clock Mass. Here is the ritual:

When mass is done, fyrst shall begynne the acte in Gramer. The Father shall have hys sete made before the Stage for Physyke and shall sytte alofte under the stage for Physyke. The Proctour shall say, Incipiatis. When the Father hath argyude as shall plese the Proctour, the Bedeyll in Arte shall bring the Master of Gramer to the Vyce-chancelar, delyveryng hym a Palmer with a Rodde, whych the Vyce-chancelar shall gyve to the seyde Master in Gramer, and so create hym Master. Then shall the Bedell purvay for every master in Gramer a shrewde Boy, whom the master in Gramer shall bete openlye in the Scolys, and the master in Gramer shall give the Boy a Grote for Hys Labour, and another Grote to hym that provydeth the Rode and the Palmer &c. de singulis. And thus endythe the Acte in that Facultye."

The crowded section of the town about the Market Place, with St. Mary's Church and the Senate House near by, is that most likely to conduce to this quaint old atmosphere, and to call up

thoughts of the whipping-boys who would endure the ceremony for a grote. Nevertheless it is not easy to pursue one thread through the plethora of facts; even those who look upon the conscientious tourist with insolent compassion, will often slip aside in Cambridge and buy a guide book and glance at it furtively in a secluded corner. I have done this, but I have more remembrance of strolling up King's Parade (FitzGerald lodged at No. 19 as an undergraduate), through the quadrangle of King's College, with ever a backward glance at the "chapel beyond compare," and to the river. There (or from the boathouse farther upstream, by Mill Lane) one may start a quiet, minor pilgrimage in a canoe or punt to Grantchester.

FitzGerald has somewhere the remark that he wishes there were more biographies of forgotten people. It is a thought echoed by every lover of humanity. In the present generation there is no likelihood of forgetting Rupert Brooke; but were posterity, notoriously envious, to plaster over all names which are now current, Brooke's would be one to give the keenest joy in rediscovery. Oblivion could only treat him as it might treat Marlowe, not as it has treated Kirke White. I like to think that in some future time, giving the world one or two centuries to accumulate more litter in its libraries, people will still appreciate his joyous explorations carried out in leisured flannels. He is, as one of his friends points out with nice discrimination, very far removed from the mystic, childlike poet; he is, as nearly as may be, the keen, quick, analytical,

exploring boy—with the addition of a mind gold-dusty.

It was as a poet of action, of doing things, that his verse flowered so rapidly, for instance in America, where, as perhaps nowhere else, is understood "that tearing hunger to do and do and do things." He goes on in his letter: "I want to walk 1,000 miles, and write 1,000 plays, and sing 1,000 poems, and drink 1,000 pots of beer, and kiss 1,000 girls, and—oh, a million things! . . . The spring makes me almost ill with excitement. I go round corners on the roads shivering and nearly crying with suspense, as one did as a child, fearing some playmate in waiting to jump out and frighten one. . . ." He finds enthusiasm and delight in "things touched, smelt, and tasted"; though, "fretted that body and mind so soon weary, he may pine for sleep."

In a way, it matters very little where Rupert Brooke was born, for his type of unconscious rediscovery of boyhood comes somewhere in the twenties; and it came for him in Cambridgeshire. Nor necessarily at Cambridge, unless you take, as I think one must, the fields and river as part of the University. "The Old Vicarage, Granchester," was written from Berlin in 1912, and it is the poem particularly in our minds:

> Oh! there the chestnuts, summer through,
> Beside the river make for you
> A tunnel of green gloom, and sleep
> Deeply above; and green and deep
> The stream mysterious glides beneath,
> Green as a dream and deep as death.—
> Oh, damn! I know it! And I know

How the May fields all golden show,
And when the day is young and sweet,
Gild gloriously the bare feet
That run to bathe. . . .

I cannot keep from quoting more than might be thought permissible, for the "humour that is cousin to the imagination" shows nowhere more clearly than in this long passage:

I only know that you may lie
Day long and watch the Cambridge sky,
And, flower-lulled in sleepy grass,
Hear the cool lapse of hours pass,
Until the centuries blend and blur
In Grantchester, in Grantchester . . .
Still in the dawnlit waters cool
His ghostly Lordship swims the pool,
And tries the strokes, essays the tricks,
Long learnt on Hellespont, or Styx;
Dan Chaucer hears his river still
Chatter beneath a phantom mill;
Tennyson notes, with studious eye,
How Cambridge waters hurry by . . .
And in that garden, black and white
Creep whispers through the grass all night;
And 'spectral dance, before the dawn,
A hundred Vicars down the lawn;
Curates, long dust, will come and go
On lissom, clerical, printless toe;
And oft between the boughs is seen
The sly shade of a Rural Dean . . .
Till, at a shiver in the skies,
Vanishing with Satanic cries,
The prim ecclesiastic rout
Leaves but a startled sleeper-out,
Grey heavens, the first bird's drowsy calls,
The falling house that never falls. . . .

"Few poets have mocked and made fun and made

beauty like that, all in one breath," says Mr. de la Mare, as the friend of Brooke whom I quoted previously. His golden moments burnt themselves into print spontaneously, as if hot from under his heart, and form now relics of a personality it would have been good to know.

Fitting in with the conclusion of " Grantchester," the church clock, which one may just see from the river, stands still at ten to three. Though some wag moved it forward an hour during the last daylight-saving period, it is now as he recalled it. We hope it stays that way for a long time, as it were an eternal moment, in memory of the little mound at Scyros, half the world away—the

> . . . corner of a foreign field
> That is for ever England.

BISHOP'S STORTFORD

IF Bishop's Stortford were not to be for us the entry to another county, Hertfordshire, I should be tempted to return to the centre of Essex, the wheatfields which lie from Thaxted to Dunmow, and so on to Chelmsford once again, following the diminutive River Chelmer. As I have said before, the only way to catch the soul of Essex is to spend some time within this region. I recall the winding road from Dunmow northward, which dips and turns but can never quite escape the view ahead of Thaxted spire. In Thaxted village there is first of all the market cross, or, rather, timbered market hall, in the place at the foot of the hill; then the ascent to one of the finest churches in England—a glory to the forgotten architect. The pleasure is not lost inside, with the good roof, the colourful appearance of the banners, and—the most healthful sign of all—the children of the village who come inside of their own will and who love to play. One afternoon five little girls scattered from the doorway at the menace of my approach, but they gained courage when they saw how truly harmless the apparition was; and so, though I had intended to make a study of the interior, I found myself surprised into a game of hide and seek about the pillars. It may have been sacrilegious; it was

certainly strenuous ; and on the whole, even when caught, it was very pleasant and harmless.

Outside and in the churchyard is a fine view towards the woods of Elsenham and Henham ; and on investigation, from the corner of the enclosure, leading towards a weather-beaten windmill, I found a lane—a tiny little lane with some tiny little cottages, each with miniature doors indescribably and inconceivably small for human beings, curtained and overhung with vines. There might live the " Midget " of Mr. de la Mare.

It is curious to note that no sooner does one's face turn forward than memory tries to lug it back. It is impossible to suppress all divagations. The road from Thaxted wound on for me past Saffron Walden—it is pretty that the plant once grown there should leave its name upon the map—to Audley End, where there is the famous House. " One of the stateliest palaces of the kingdom," said Evelyn. The remark of James I is much to the point : " It was too much for a King, but it might do well for a Lord Treasurer." This way came Pepys, on the occasion of his treasure hunt at Brampton. He was " mighty merry " in going over the house and garden, and above all he notes the cellars, " where we went down and drank of much good liquor. And indeed the cellars are fine : and here my wife and I did sing to my great content. And then to the garden, and there eat many grapes, and took some with us : and so away thence exceeding well satisfied. . . . " But I go back no farther along that road ; Stortford is prior in its call for even a too brief tribute to Cecil Rhodes.

It was here that Rhodes was born (in South Street) and was educated. He was baptized in St. Michael's Church upon the hill, as a bronze tablet there commemorates; and his father held the vicarage. The father was a man of system and strong tenets. He preached invariably ten minutes, never more and never less. He hoped his seven sons would follow his example and become "the angels of the seven Churches"; instead of that four went into the army and three to the colonies.

"Long-headed Cecil," as the philosophic boy was called because at thirteen he decided he would never marry (and stuck to it), passed uneventful school-days here, and only left because of his weak health. He was at this time seventeen; his hope had been to go to Oxford, but his only chance of living was thought to be in Natal. There, accordingly, he went to join one of his brothers. His hope was ever in the back of his mind. He tried to keep up studies in Natal, and even on the long trek across to the diamond fields he took with him some volumes of the Classics and a small Greek lexicon. Among the diamonds this time for reading passed away, but, like some assemblages during the war, the diggers at the fields provided a liberal education—"diggers from America and Australia, German speculators, Fenian head-centres, traders, saloon keepers, professional gamblers, barristers, ex-officers of the Army and Navy, younger sons of good family who had not taken to a profession or have been obliged to leave; a marvellous motley assemblage, among whom money flows like water from the amazing productiveness

THAXTED CHURCH

of the mine ; and in the midst of them a hundred or so keen-eyed Jewish merchants, who have gathered like eagles over their prey, and a few thousand natives who have come to work for wages, to steal diamonds and to lay their earnings out in rifles and powder "—that is Froude's description of the first university which Rhodes attended.

There are some fine pictures of Rhodes at Kimberley in Mr. Williams's "Life." "On the sorting ground he is described as a tall, fair boy with a ruddy complexion and aquiline features, 'wearing flannels of the school playing field, somewhat shrunken with strenuous rather than effectual washings that still left the colour of red dust . . . his tall figure crumpled up on an inverted bucket, as he sat scraping his gravel surrounded by his dusky Zulus, . . . moody and deaf to the chatter around him, his blue eyes fixed intently on his work or on some fabric of his brain.'" Again, "silent and self-contained . . . leaning moodily with hands in his pockets against a street wall. He hardly ever had a companion and seemingly took no interest but in his own thoughts . . . I do not believe if a flock of the most adorable women passed through the street, he would go across the street to see them." And though he danced occasionally, he usually chose "the ugliest partners in the room, asserting that he enjoyed it chiefly for the exercise."

A serious illness again warned him that he could not presume too far on health. To complete his recovery he went for a long trek into the Transvaal, breathing with every breath more love

for the fine country and more dreams of the future. It was on this trek that he confirmed his decision to return to England and to go to Oxford. Successful digger, already a shrewd business man, already with high visions in him, he met here an early shock. He failed to qualify in Latin prose, and it was with difficulty that he entered Oriel as a passman.

Very briefly, that was Rhodes; as a young man rather than a millionaire, a freshman rather than a premier. With all his faults, with all that one may disagree with, a great man, and with the great man's touch of little things. Typical was his invitation for the Minister of Natal to come to see him, in after days, for a discussion of South African Union. It ended with the postcript: "besides, the hydrangeas are in full bloom: it would be a pity to miss them." The little things he thought of completed and rounded off his great achievements; each achievement a life-work for almost any other man, and each impossible to most. Hard to exaggerate is the importance of but one act, the initiation of the scholarships.

A Titan for doing things, even to the last words he breathed at Groote Schuur, the name so hard for us to mouth. Watts took him as model for the statue of "Physical Energy" in Kensington Gardens. As in that statue, as well as energy personified there is likewise his element of grace. It might be only a road round Table Mountain which engaged him; but it was done with the thought that "human beings would walk that way long after he had gone."

WIDFORD AND EDMONTON

CHARLES LAMB, as one remembers, was city born and city bred. The streets of Old London were his fairyland; but when he turned, as every man must sometimes turn, to green fields for his pleasure, none seemed to him so sweet as Hertfordshire's. "By a pretty fiction," as Mr. Lucas says, he declared himself a native of this county. There are many references in his writings to "Blakesmoor in H——shire," and by the phrase he means Blakesware House, near Widford. This was his second home. The housekeeper of the deserted house (the owners had then moved away) was Charles Lamb's grandmother, Mrs. Field; and the little boy came often with his ten-year-older sister to stay in vacation time. A quaint, stammering, tiny child he was, with one blue and one brown eye, fresh to the country and wondering, as he says, everywhere.

Perhaps the best of the descriptions of Blakesmoor occurs in "Dream Children," the retrospective essay written in 1821 after his brother's death and in part caused by the recollections flooding over him at that. Here, addressing his imaginary children, he feigns to be telling memories of their great-grandmother Field:

Then I told how good she was to all her grandchildren,

having us to the great house in the holydays, where I in particular used to spend many hours by myself, in gazing upon the old busts of the Twelve Cæsars that had been Emperors of Rome, till the old marble heads would seem to live again, or I to be turned into marble with them; how I never could be tired with roaming about that huge mansion, with its vast, empty rooms, with their worn-out hangings, fluttering tapestry, and carved oaken panels, with the gilding almost rubbed out—sometimes in the spacious old-fashioned gardens, which I had almost to myself, unless when now and then a solitary gardening man would cross me—and how the nectarines and peaches hung upon the walls, without my ever offering to pluck them, because they were forbidden fruit, unless now and then,—and because I had more pleasure in strolling about the old melancholy looking yew trees, or the firs, and picking up the red berries, and the fir apples, which were good for nothing but to look at—or in lying about upon the fresh grass, with all the fine garden smells around me—or basking in the orangery, till I could almost fancy myself ripening too along with the oranges and the limes in that grateful warmth—or in watching the dace that darted to and fro in the fish-pond, at the bottom of the garden, with here and there a great sulky pike hanging midway down the water in silent state, as if it mocked at their impertinent friskings,—I had more pleasure in these busy-idle diversions than in all the sweet flavours of peaches, nectarines, oranges, and such like common baits of children. . . .

Mrs. Field's grave is in Widford Churchyard, and the tombstone, though one time knocked down by a falling branch, has been restored. If you walk round the back of the Church, and have the hardihood to trespass a little on the hillside between the church and the station, you will find the site of the old wilderness of which Lamb speaks in "Rosamund Gray"—at least, from Mr. Lucas's

description and from the general lie of the land, we took this to be the spot. The house is gone —it was gone in Lamb's later days—but you may get a view of the brawling brook which formed the *lacus incognitus* of Lamb's infancy.

Besides being the region of Lamb's second home, and the region which first saw him in love —with Ann Simmons from the village, the "Anna" of the sonnets and the "Alice" of the essays— Widford comes later into the story of his life, and provides some pretty pictures on which all who love him like to dwell. Of these my reproduction will be both faint and brief, but they stand out clearly and attractively in the "Life" by Mr. Lucas.

The time lies between 1827 and 1832, when Lamb was living by the New River at Enfield, and when he used often to walk down to Widford, giving the day to the sixteen miles. It was a good stretch for his small, spare legs and curious plantigrade motion. He was upon the road so small and "immaterial" a figure that a friend, in walking with him, would often put hands under his arms and lift him over stiles as if he were nothing. Likewise it must be remembered by those who think sixteen miles small warrant for a day, that Lamb was wont to calculate his distances not by long measure, but by what he called Ale and Beer Measure. "Now," he would say, "I have walked a pint." This period, I repeat, was very different from his earlier "holydays." By this time his best work was done. The golden years of essays were completed. The East India House

was but a memory—he was superannuated; and pathetically, his "little visits probably signified that Mary Lamb was ill," in confinement for her derangement.

Not that you would guess a hint of change from boyhood in the cheerful, playful times among the children at Widford Watermill; or rather, for I have put it badly, you would realize that the man had learned to play where the boy had learned to think. At Widford with the Hunts, and in particular with Lizzie Hunt, there were innumerable games as if with his own children realized from dreams. At Goddard House there was a school, and he would enter against all protest of the teachers, making seriousness and work impossible. Once I believe the principal tried to bribe him to her side, and even tried to make him take charge of the flock for a whole day. He willingly acceded, but (so Hood says of him) made no other use of his "brief authority" than to give a whole holiday. He thereupon relapsed from favour, and was from that time forward always on the children's side. He was, said Mr. Lucas's old friend of eighty-four who gave him her own story, "really rather naughty with the children." He would take them from the school into the village and have, we may believe, an elaborate search for the well-known little shop which had a door cut in two; over the lower half of this he would lean, rapping his stick upon the floor, and calling loudly, "'Abigail Ives! Abigail Ives!' 'Ah, Mr. Lamb,' she used to reply from the inner room, 'I thought I knew your rap.' 'Yes, Abigail, it is I, and I've

brought my money with me. Give these young ladies sixpennyworth of Gibraltar rock.' Gibraltar rock was Abigail Ives' speciality, and sixpennyworth was an unheard-of amount except when Mr. Lamb was in the village."

To follow this quaint sprite with the "immaterial body," the head "worthy of Aristotle," and the smile of singular sweetness, above all men equipped with lambent wit, we should in reality follow the line much farther in to Edmonton rather than hesitate as we do at Hoddesdon, for one last excursion aside to Ware and Hertford. As an interlude, however, and I hope the last interlude, I must cut in with one or two remarks about an older character than Lamb. In 1653, "Printed by T. Maxey for Rich. Marriot, in S. Dunstan's Churchyard, Fleet-street," came out a little book, price eighteen pence, called "The Compleat Angler." There are very few copies of Izaak Walton's little octavos, with their quaint engravings of fishes, in existence now. Austin Dobson once remarked this, and conjectured: "Probably they were born out in the pockets of Honest Izaak's 'Brothers of the Angle,' or left to bake and cockle in the sunny corners of wasp-haunted ale-house windows, or dropped in the deep grass by some casual owner, more careful for flies and caddis-worms, or possibly for the contents of a leathern bottle, than all the 'choicely-good' madrigals of Maudlin the milkmaid."

So we cannot read Izaak Walton as he is best read; but we may still pick him up in a modern

edition and see within the first four lines that the scene opens at Ponders End, and that the characters proceed, discoursing regularly at the rate of four pages to the mile, along to their morning draught at the Thatched House in Hoddesdon.

From Hoddesdon, if we still pursue the "Angler," the second day began on Amwell Hill just as the sun was up. "Look!" says the Huntsman, pointing below to the River Lea where the otter hunt was nearly over, "down at the bottom of the hill there, in that meadow, chequered with water-lilies and lady's-smocks. . . ." In that sentence we have the secret of a book which has so many times been read, like venison is eaten, more for the accoutrement and side-dishes than for the actual meat—or, in this case, fish. And as such it is particularly fitting to quote near Amwell Hill, which, unlike Tottenham, is so little altered from Walton's time that we feel envious of the Haileybury boys. "Under that broad beech tree," says Walton, with meticulous care for its exact location, "I sat down when I was last this way a-fishing. And the birds in the adjoining grove seemed to have a friendly contention with an echo, whose dead voice seemed to live in a hollow tree, near to the brow of that primrose hill. There I sat viewing the silver streams glide silently towards their centre, the tempestuous sea; yet sometimes opposed by rugged roots and pebble-stones, which broke their waves and turned them into foam. And sometimes I beguiled time by viewing the harmless lambs; some leaping securely in the shade, whilst others sported themselves in the cheerful sun;

and saw others craving comfort from the swollen udders of their bleating dams. As I thus sat, these and other sights had so fully possest my soul with content, that I thought, as the poet hath happily exprest it :

> I was for that time lifted above earth
> And possest joys not promised in my birth.

As I left this place, and entered into the next field, a second pleasure entertained me ; 'twas a handsome milkmaid, that had not yet attained so much age and wisdom as to load her mind with any fears of many things that will never be, as too many men too often do ; but she cast away all care, and sung like a nightingale. Her voice was good and the ditty fitted for it : it was that smooth song which was made by Kit Marlow, now at least fifty years ago ; and the milkmaid's mother sung an answer to it, which was made by Sir Walter Raleigh in his younger days."

Just as surely as his nouns have each some adjective, so Izaak Walton's fishes have each some such accessory. Whether he goes up the river towards Ware or down towards Waltham, we are sure that he will meet with other cheerful brethren before night brings the fresh sheets and the smell of lavender.

I come now to my conclusion. On a July afternoon the decrepit motor lorry which took part in some of these excursions, halted, coughing (as was its habit), at the " Bell," Edmonton—a hostelry familiar from " John Gilpin." Church Street is

not far away, and Mr. Judd is careful to keep Lamb's Cottage open and welcome to any friendly visitor. At first view the cottage is diminutive, shrinking back from the road and huddled between two bolder neighbours; and inside there is the tiny room—Lamb liked small rooms—where he would cajole Mary into allowing one more nip of gin and water. Only when you penetrate to the garden do you see that, for all its smallness, the cottage is larger than it seems. The garden is not much altered, and there were, on this afternoon, some moss-roses strangely reminiscent of old-fashioned times. One may, perhaps, catch here some whiff of the pipes that Lamb was always forswearing and yet always smoking; and one may hope his last days were pleasantly employed among the roses.

He died in this cottage, and was buried in the church a hundred yards along the street. More pleasant than might be expected from any pre-conception of the neighbourhood, the church is worth a visit for itself. Here, gazing at the Lamb memorial, with one of Cowper by its side, I take my leave of this ill-regulated chronicle.

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